THE BHAGAVAD GITA

TEXT, WORD-TO-WORD MEANING, TRANSLATION
AND COMMENTARY BY

Sri Swami Sivananda

Published by

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192
Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India
www.sivanandaonline.org, www.dlshq.org

Fourteenth Edition: 2012
[5,000 Copies]

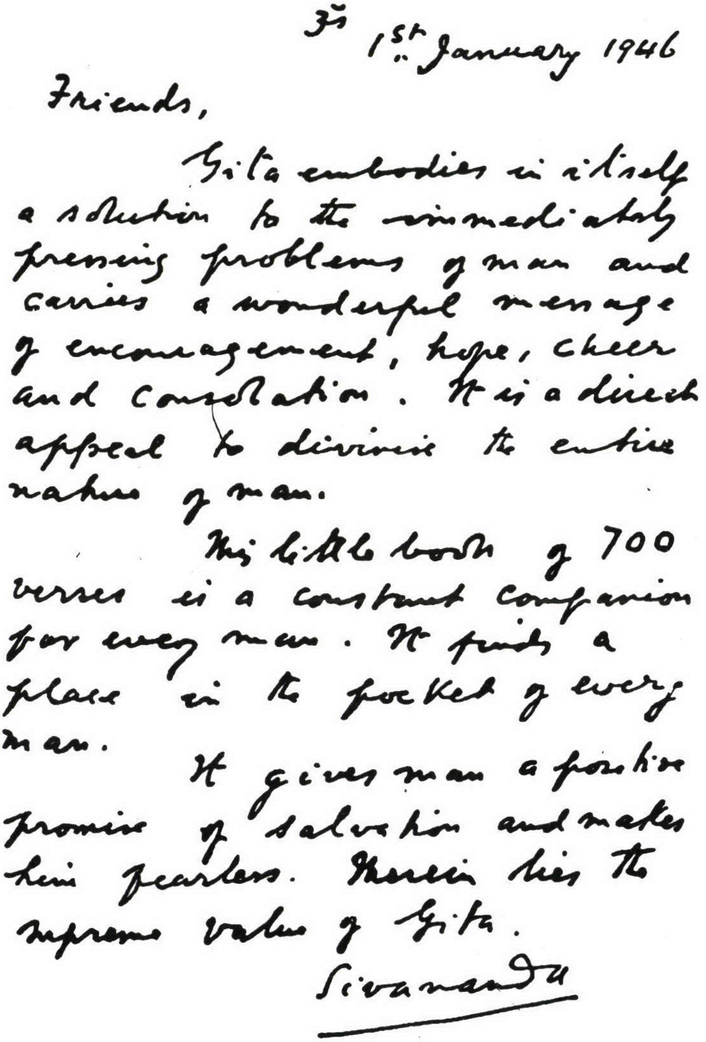
©The Divine Life Trust Society

ISBN 81-7052-000-2
ES13

PRICE: ₹290/-

Published by Swami Padmanabhananda for The Divine Life Society,
Shivanandanagar, and printed by him at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest
Academy Press, P.O. Shivanandanagar, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal,
Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India
For online orders and Catalogue : visit dlsbooks.org

Dedicated
to
Bhagavan Vyasa
and
Lord Krishna
Avatara of Lord Vishnu
Flute-Bearer of Vrindavana
Joy of Devaki, Beloved of Radha
Redeemer of the Fallen
Friend of Arjuna
The Ideal of the Devotees



ॐ 1st January 1946

Friends,

Gita embodies in itself a solution to the immediately pressing problems of man and carries a wonderful message of encouragement, hope, cheer and consolation. It is a direct appeal to divinise the entire nature of man.

This little book of 700 verses is a constant companion for every man. It finds a place in the pocket of every man.

It gives man a positive promise of salvation and makes him fearless. Therein lies the supreme value of Gita.

Sivananda

PREFACE

The Bhagavad Gita has been acclaimed to be a gospel of life. It has been translated into almost all the languages and has drawn the attention of scholars, saints and mystics, the world over. The importance of the Bhagavad Gita is in its offering satisfactory solutions to the problems that beset mankind of all times. His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is one of the great exponents of the philosophy, religion and the technique of the Bhagavad Gita system, and his commentary is regarded as one of the most authoritative expositions available.

This work originally appeared, in the early days of the Divine Life Society, as a series in six parts, published separately, which, later on, was combined into a single volume and released for the benefit of the students of Yoga. Having passed through several editions, it is now once again being made available to the public, after it ran out of print some time ago. It has been our endeavour to bring out this edition in as neat a form as possible, which, we are confident, will meet the demands of students as well as the public in general, in an appreciable manner.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

Swami Sivananda

PRAYER TO BHAGAVAN VYASA

नमोऽस्तु ते व्यास विशालबुद्धे फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र ।
येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥

Salutations to Thee, O Vyasa, of broad intellect, with eyes large like the petals of full-blown lotus, by whom the lamp of knowledge, filled with the oil of the Mahabharata, has been lighted.

PRAYER TO THE GURU

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुर्गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

Guru is the Creator (Brahma); Guru is the Preserver (Vishnu); Guru is the Destroyer (Mahesvara); Guru is verily the Supreme Absolute. Prostration to That Guru.

ध्यानमूलं गुरोर्मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरोः पदम् ।
मन्त्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्षमूलं गुरोः कृपा ॥

The Guru's Form is the root of meditation; the Guru's Feet are the root of worship; the Guru's Word is the root of Mantra; the Guru's Grace is the root of Liberation.

PRAYER TO LORD SRI KRISHNA

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय देवकीनन्दनाय च ।
नन्दगोपकुमाराय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥

Prostration, again and again, to Lord Sri Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, the delighter of Devaki, the darling of Nandagopa, the protector of the cows.

Krishna! Thou art my sweet companion now. Thou hast a soft corner for me in Thy heart. Teach me now the mysteries of Thy divine play (Lilas) and the secrets of Vedanta. Thou sayest in the Gita: "I am the Vedantakrit and the Vedavit (the author of Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas)." Thou art my best teacher. Explain to me the intricate problems of Vedanta. Give me easy lessons. Kindly explain: why did Sukadeva, a Brahma Jnani who was absorbed in Brahman (established in Advaita-Samadhi or the highest non-dual state), teach the Bhagavata to Parikshit? What are the differences in the experiences of a Bhakta who enjoys Sayujya state (of union with his God), of a Yogi who is established in Asamprajnata-Samadhi (the highest superconscious state) and of a Jnani who has Advaita-Avastharupa-Samadhi (a state in which he is firmly established in Oneness or Brahman)? What is the real difference between Jivanmukti (liberation while living) and Videhamukti (disembodied liberation), Turiya (transcendent state) and Turiyatita (beyond the Turiya), Kshara-Purusha (mutable Person), Akshara-Purusha (imperishable Person), and Purushottama (Supreme Person)?

Let me be frank with Thee, O Krishna, because Thou art the indweller of my heart, the witness of my mind, and the Lord of my Prana (life-breath). I cannot hide anything from Thee, because Thou directly witnessest all the thoughts that emanate from my mind. I have no fear of Thee. Thou art my friend now. Treat me as Thou didst treat Arjuna. I shall sing and dance. You can play on the flute. Let us eat butter and sugar-candy together. Let us sing. Teach me the Gita. Let me hear it directly from Thy lips once more.

O Thou invisible One! O adorable and supreme One! Thou permeatest and penetratest this vast universe from the unlimited space down to the tiny blade of grass at my feet. Thou art the basis of all these names and forms. Thou art the apple of my eye, and the Prema (divine love) of my heart, the very life of my life, the very soul of my soul, the illuminator of my intellect and senses, the sweet Anahata (mystic) music of my heart, and the substance of my physical, mental and causal frames.

I recognise Thee alone as the mighty ruler of this universe and the inner controller of my three bodies. I prostrate myself again and again before Thee, my Lord! Thou art my sole refuge. I trust Thee alone, O ocean of mercy and love! Elevate! Enlighten! Guide! Protect! Remove the obstacles from my spiritual path. Remove Avidya or the veil of ignorance. O Thou Jagadguru! I cannot bear any longer, even for a second, the miseries of this body, this life and this Samsara. Meet me quickly. O Prabho! I am pining, I am melting. Listen, listen, listen to my fervent, Antarika (innermost) prayer. Do not be cruel, my Lord. Thou art Dinabandhu (friend of the afflicted). Thou art Adhama-Uddharaka (one who raises the down-trodden). Thou art Patitapavana (purifier of the fallen).

O Magnificent Lord of love and compassion! O fountainhead of bliss and knowledge! Thou art the eye of our eyes, the ear of our ears, the Prana of our Pranas, the mind of our minds, and the soul of our souls. Thou art the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker and the unknown knower. Pray, deliver us from all temptations. Give us light, purity and knowledge.

O Prabho, Prananatha (Lord of my Prana), Vibhu-Visvanatha (all-pervading Lord of the universe)! Accept our prayer. Guide us. Lift us from the mire of Samsara. Enlighten us. Protect us. Thee alone we adore, Thee alone we worship, on Thee alone we meditate, in Thee alone we have taken refuge.

INTRODUCTION

GLORY OF THE GITA

The Bhagavad Gita is a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna, narrated in the Bhishma-Parva of the Mahabharata. It comprises eighteen chapters of a total of 700 Sanskrit verses. Considerable matter has been condensed and compressed within these verses. On the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Lord Krishna, during the course of His most interesting and instructive talk with Arjuna, revealed the profound, sublime and soul-stirring spiritual truths, and expounded to him the rare secrets of Yoga, Vedanta, Bhakti and Karma. All the teachings of Lord Krishna were subsequently recorded as the Song Celestial or the Bhagavad Gita by Sri Bhagavan Vyasa for the benefit of humanity at large. The world is under a great debt of gratitude to Sri Vyasa who has presented this Celestial Song to humanity for their daily conduct in life, spiritual uplift and Self-realisation. Only those who are self-controlled and are endowed with faith can reap the full benefit of the Gita, which is the Science of the Soul.

The Gita Jayanti day or the birthday of the Bhagavad Gita is celebrated throughout India by all the admirers and lovers of this unique book on the 11th day (Ekadasi) of the bright half of the Margasirsha month according to the Hindu almanac. It was the day on which this scripture was revealed to the world by Sanjaya.

In the whole world-literature there is no book so elevating and so inspiring as the Gita. The Gita expounds very lucidly the cardinal principles or the fundamentals of the Hindu religion and the Hindu Dharma. It is the source of all wisdom. It is your great guide. It is your supreme teacher. It is an inexhaustible spiritual treasure. It is a fountain of bliss. It is an ocean of knowledge. It is full of divine splendour and grandeur.

The Gita is the cream of the Vedas. It is the essence of the Upanishads. It is the universal scripture for all people of all temperaments and for all times. It is a wonderful book with sublime thoughts and practical instructions on Yoga, devotion, Vedanta and action. It is a marvellous book, profound in thoughts and sublime in heights of vision. It gives peace and solace to the souls who are afflicted by the three fires (Taapas) of this mortal world (Samsara), viz., Adhyatmika (afflictions caused by one's own body), Adhibhautika (those caused by beings around one), and Adhidaivika (those caused by the gods).

The Bhagavad Gita contains the divine nectar. It is the Chintamani, Kalpataru and Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling gem, tree and cow respectively). You can milk out anything from it. It is a book of eternity. It is not a catch-penny book which has a life like that of a mushroom. The Gita has been my constant companion of life. It is a *vade mecum* for all. Peace, Bliss, Ananda, Happiness, Wisdom, Atman, Brahman, Purusha, Dhama, Nirvana, Param Padam, Gita are all only synonymous terms.

The Gita is a boundless ocean of nectar. It is an immortal celestial fruit of the tree of the Upanishads. In this unique book, you will find an unbiased exposition of the philosophy of action, devotion and knowledge, and a wonderful synthesis. The Bhagavad Gita is a rare and splendid flower that wafts its sweet aroma throughout the world. All the Upanishads represent the cows. Sri Krishna is the milker of the Upanishad-cows; Partha (Arjuna) is the calf who first tasted that milk of wisdom of the Self, which was milked by the Divine Cowherd, Sri Krishna, for the benefit of Arjuna and all humanity, as the Bhagavad Gita. It helps to solve not only Arjuna's problems and doubts, but also the world problems and the problems and doubts of every individual. Glory to Lord Krishna, the friend of the cowherds of Gokula, the Joy of Devaki! He who drinks the nectar of the Gita through purification of the heart and meditation, attains immortality, eternal bliss, everlasting peace and perennial joy.

Just as the dark, unfathomed depths of the ocean contain most precious pearls, so also the Gita contains spiritual gems of incalculable value. You will have to dive deep into the depths of the ocean of the Gita with sincere attitude of reverence and faith. Only then will you be able to collect the spiritual pearls of the Gita. Only then will you be able to comprehend the profound and subtle teachings of the Gita.

The Gita is a unique book for all ages. It is a book that comes under the category of Prasthanatraya, the authoritative books of the Hindu religion. The Gita is the Immortal Song of the Soul, which bespeaks of the glory of life. The instructions that are inculcated by

Lord Krishna are for the whole world. It is a standard book on Yoga for all. The language is as simple as it could be. Even a man who has an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit can go through the book. It deals with the four Yogas, viz., Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

There are countless commentaries on the Gita at the present day. A volume can be written on each verse. A busy man with Karmic tendencies will be benefited by the commentary of Sri Bala Gangadhara Tilak (Gita Rahasya), a man of devotion by studying Sridhara's commentary, and a man of reason by Sri Sankara's commentary.

There are now hundreds of commentaries on this wonderful book. The Gita is like an ocean. Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhva have given their own interpretations of the Gita and established their own philosophy. Anyone can dive deep into this ocean of the Gita, bring out the most precious pearls of divine knowledge and give his own interpretation. Glory to the Gita! Glory to the Lord of the Gita!

The teachings of the Gita are broad, universal and sublime. Its teachings do not belong to any cult, sect, creed, particular age, place or country. They are meant for the people of the whole world at large. The teachings are based on the Upanishads, the ancient wisdom of the seers (Rishis) and sages. It teaches a method which is within the reach of all. It has a message for the solace, peace, freedom, salvation and perfection of all human beings.

The Gita is like the lake Manasasarovara for the Paramahamsas (monks and renunciates) and thirsting aspirants to sport in. It is the ocean of bliss in which the seekers of Truth swim with joy and ecstasy. If the philosopher's stone touches a piece of iron even at one point, the whole of it is transformed into gold. Even so, if you live in the spirit of even one verse, you will doubtless be transmuted into divinity.

Study of the Gita alone is sufficient for the purpose of daily Svadhyaya (scriptural study). You will find a solution here for all your doubts. The more you study with devotion and faith, the more you will get deeper knowledge, penetrative insight and clear right thinking. Even if you live in the spirit of one verse of the Gita, all your miseries will come to an end and you will attain the goal of life—Immortality and Eternal Peace.

The Gita is a gospel for the whole world. It is meant for the generality of mankind. It was given over five thousand years ago on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, by Lord Krishna to Arjuna.

None but the Lord can bring out such an unprecedented and marvellous book which gives peace to the readers, which helps and guides them in the attainment of Supreme Bliss, which has survived up to this time. This itself proves clearly that God exists, that God is an embodiment of knowledge and that one can attain perfection or liberation by realising God alone.

The whole world is a big battlefield. The real Kurukshetra is within you. The battle of Mahabharata is still raging within you. Ignorance (Avidya) is Dhritarashtra. The individual soul is Arjuna. The Indweller Who dwells in your heart is Lord Krishna, the charioteer. The body is your chariot. The senses (Indriyas) are the horses. The mind, egoism, senses, Samskaras (mental impressions), Vasanas (latent tendencies), cravings, Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes), lust, jealousy, greed, pride and hypocrisy are your dire enemies.

GUIDE FOR STUDY

As the Gita contains subtle and profound teachings, you should study the Gita under a qualified teacher—a Brahma-Nishtha Guru (a preceptor who is established in the Absolute), with great and intense faith, single-minded devotion and purity. Only then will the truths of the Gita be revealed unto you like the fruit on the palm of your hand. Good commentaries like those of Swami Madhusudana Sarasvati, Swami Sankarananda, and Sri Sankara, written by sages of Self-realisation, will be of immense help to you.

Worldly-minded people, however intellectual they may be, cannot grasp the essential teachings of the Gita. They will enter into unnecessary discussions and useless debates. They will cavil and carp at the teachings. Ignorant people only say: "There is no intimate connection between the verses. They are thrown together in a disorderly manner. There is a great deal of repetition." If they study the Gita with reverence and faith under a qualified teacher, all their doubts will vanish. They will realise that there is a close connection between the verses in all the chapters. Repetitions in the Gita and the Upanishads are useful repetitions. They are calculated to create a deep and indelible impression on the minds of the aspirants.

Lord Krishna speaks from different levels of consciousness. In the Gita, the term "Avyakta" sometimes refers to Mulaprakriti (primordial Nature), sometimes also to Para Brahman (the Absolute). Therefore, the help of a teacher is necessary if you wish to know the right significance of the verses. In the Kathopanishad, the term 'brick' is used to denote the Devata (god). In Hatha Yoga it is said: "At the junction of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna, there is a young virgin." The esoteric meaning is: "There is the Sushumna-Nadi between the Ida and the Pingala." You cannot understand the real meaning of these terms without the help of a Master. Even so, you cannot rightly comprehend the meaning of the verses of the Gita without the help of a teacher. Otherwise, you will be like the man who brought a horse before one who asked for "Saindhava", when he was taking his food. "Saindhava" means "salt" as well as "horse"!

HARMONY IN THE GITA

Man is a composite of three fundamental factors, viz., cognition, feeling and will. There are people with three kinds of temperaments, viz., the active temperament, the emotional temperament and the rational temperament. So, there are the three Yogas, viz., Jnana Yoga for the man of enquiry and self-analysis or rational temperament, Bhakti Yoga for the man of emotional temperament, and Karma Yoga for the man of active temperament. One Yoga is as efficacious as the other.

The Gita formulates the theory of the three Margas (paths), viz., the Jnana Marga, the Bhakti Marga and the Karma Marga. According to the teaching of the Gita, there is no conflict among the three. The Gita harmonises wonderfully the philosophy of action, devotion and knowledge. All the three must be harmoniously blended if you wish to attain perfection. You should have the head of Sri Sankara, the heart of Lord Buddha and the hand of Raja Janaka. The three horses of this body-chariot—action, emotion and intellect—should work in perfect harmony. Only then will this body-chariot move smoothly and you can reach the destination safely and quickly. Only then can you rejoice in the Self within. Only then can you sing the song of *Soham* (I am He).

Only then can you be in tune with the Infinite. Only then can you hear the soundless voice of the soul and enjoy the sweet internal music of the Self.

The central teaching of the Gita is the attainment of the final beatitude of life or perfection or freedom (Moksha) by doing the duties of life or one's Svadharma. The Lord says to Arjuna: "Therefore without attachment, do thou always perform action which should be done; for by performing action without attachment man reaches the Supreme."

The Gita is divided into three sections, illustrative of the three terms of the Mahavakya or the Great Sentence of the Sama Veda, *Tat-Tvam-Asi,* (That thou art). In accordance with this view, the first six chapters deal with the path of action or Karma Yoga and the nature of "thou" or the *Tvam-Pada.* The next six chapters explain the path of devotion or Bhakti Yoga and the nature of "That", *Tat-Pada.* The last six chapters treat of the path of knowledge or Jnana Yoga and the nature of the term "art" or *Asi-Pada* which establishes the identity of the individual and the Supreme Soul, Jiva-Brahma-Aikya.

The eighteen chapters of the Gita are not woven in a disconnected or discordant manner. There is an intimate relationship or vital connection between one chapter and another. Arjuna became very despondent and the teachings of the second chapter which bespeak of the immortality of the Soul, opened his eyes and gave him strength and courage. Arjuna then understood the technique of Karma Yoga and renunciation of the fruits of actions. Then he learnt the methods to control the senses and the mind and to practise concentration and meditation. Then Lord Krishna gave a description of His various Vibhutis (manifestations) in order to prepare him for the vision of the Cosmic Form or Visvarupa-Darsana. Then Arjuna experienced the magnificent Cosmic Vision. Then he understood the nature of a Jivanmukta or Bhagavata. Then he had knowledge of the field and the knower of the three Gunas and the Purushottama. Then he had knowledge of the divine attributes and the three kinds of faith, and the essence of Sannyasa Yoga in the end. Just as a student is coached up in the university, so also Arjuna was coached up by Lord Krishna for the attainment of knowledge of the Self in the Adhyatmic (spiritual) University. Arjuna had various kinds of doubts. Lord Krishna cleared his doubts one by one. He pushed Arjuna up the ladder of Yoga from one rung to another. Ultimately Arjuna placed his foot on the highest rung of the ladder, attained knowledge of the Self, and then exclaimed in joy: "O my Lord! My delusion has been destroyed. I have attained knowledge through Thy Grace. I am firm now. My doubts have now vanished *in toto*. I will act according to Thy word."

You can become a Jivanmukta by annihilating the ego, and the two currents of Raga (likes) and Dvesha (dislikes). You can become a liberated sage by annihilating the desires and cravings and by destroying the residual potencies (Samskaras) and Sankalpas (desireful thoughts). You can thus rest in your own Satchidananda-Svarupa (essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute) and still you can be active in the affairs of the world like Raja Janaka. You will not be bound by Karmas. You will not be tainted by the actions, because the idea of doership has been destroyed by the attainment of knowledge of the Self or Brahma-Jnana. This is the keynote of the Gita.

THE TWO WAYS

The seers of the Upanishads emphatically declare that the real man is the all-pervading, immortal Soul which is the substratum of this body, mind and world, which is behind the five sheaths, viz., the food sheath, the vital sheath, the mental sheath, the intellectual sheath and the blissful sheath.

The goal of life is the direct cognition or realisation of this self-luminous Self which is hidden in this body like fire in wood, and butter in milk. This Self (Atman) is the inner ruler or Antaryamin. He is the unseen governor or hidden proprietor of this house, the body.

Real religion is the attainment of this transcendental, supreme, undying, undecaying Tattva or principle through constant and profound meditation. Real life is life in the eternal Atman or Soul. True life is identification with this Supreme Soul which exists in the past, present and future, which has neither beginning, middle nor end, which has neither parts nor limbs, which is neither subtle nor gross.

The Rishis of yore attained this mysterious and marvellous Atman through the eye of intuition or the divine inner third eye

(Jnanachakshus) and then explained things of this world in the light of their knowledge of the Self. This is the direct method of Self-realisation.

You can ascend the summit of the hill of knowledge of the Self through science, art, Nature, music, etc. This is the indirect method. From the effect you go to the cause and ultimately reach the causeless Cause or Para Brahman or the ultimate, transcendental Truth. Our Western scientists will be groping in utter darkness if their purpose is only to invent some things for our physical comforts or convenient living. The goal of science is to find out the one ultimate Truth which is the substratum of the atoms, molecules, electrons, energy, motion and all physical and mental phenomena and all the laws of Nature through enquiry, observation, analysis, investigation and study of the laws of Nature. A real scientist is only a Vedantin. His mode of approach to the Truth only is different. The scientist who was saying previously: "There is nothing beyond this world", proclaims now: "The more I know of the phenomena, the more I am puzzled. Intellect is finite and cold. Behind these changing phenomena, there is the unchanging Noumenon. Behind the rotating dynamic electrons, there is the static, motionless *something*: or something beyond the intellect and the world." The Brahman of the Upanishads is the Atman of the Vedantins, Who is the Lord of these laws of Nature. "My method of approach is *a posteriori* method, from the effect to the cause. The Vedantins' method is the *a priori* method, from the cause to the effect. The goal is the same."

RECONCILIATION OF THE PATHS

In the Vishnu Purana, Bhagavan Vishnu is highly eulogised and a secondary place is given to Lord Siva. In the Siva Purana, Lord Siva is immensely praised and a secondary place is given to Lord Hari. In Devi Bhagavatam, Devi is highly praised and a secondary place is given to Lord Siva and Lord Hari. This is done in order to create intense and unswerving faith in the aspirant for his Ishta Devata or favourite deity. Siva, Hari and Devi are one. They are different aspects of the Lord. It is simply absurd if you believe that Siva is inferior to Hari or Hari is inferior to Siva.

Even so, in one place Lord Krishna praises Karma Yoga.

"*Karmasannyasat karmayogo visishyate*—Yoga of action is verily better than renunciation of action." (Chapter V. 2). In another place He praises Yoga. "The Yogi is greater than the ascetic; he is thought to be even greater than the wise; the Yogi is greater than the man of action; therefore, become thou a Yogi, O Arjuna." (Chapter VI. 46). In another place, the Lord praises Bhakti Yoga. "He, the Highest Spirit, O Partha, may be reached by unswerving devotion to Him alone." (Chapter VIII. 22). In another place, He praises Jnana Yoga. "Noble are all these, but I hold the wise as verily Myself; he, self-united, is fixed on Me, the highest path." (Chapter VII. 18)

A neophyte will be confused when he comes across these verses. But there is no room for any confusion if you think deeply. Lord Krishna has praised each Yoga in order to create interest in the aspirant in his particular Marga or path. You must remember that the Gita is a book for the people of the world at large. It was not meant for Arjuna alone. Each Yoga is as efficacious and potent as the other.

ESSENCE OF THE GITA

The Gita emphasises again and again that one should cultivate an attitude of non-attachment or detachment. It urges repeatedly that one should live in the world like the lotus-leaf, which is unaffected by water. He who acts placing all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment, is as unaffected by sin as a lotus-leaf by water—*Padmapatramivambhasa*. (Chapter V. 10)

Attachment is due to Moha. Attachment is the offspring of the quality of Rajas. Non-attachment is born of Sattva. Attachment is an Asuri-Sampat, demoniacal quality. Non-attachment is a Daivi-Sampat, divine attribute. Attachment is born of ignorance, selfishness and passion. Attachment brings death. Non-attachment is wisdom. Non-attachment brings freedom. Practice of detachment is a rigorous discipline indeed. You will have to practise it again and again. You may tumble down like a baby who is just learning to walk, but you will have to rise up again with a smile and a cheerful heart. Failures are not stumbling blocks, but stepping-stones to success. Try to dwell always in your own Self. Abide in your own Self. Abide in your centre. Think of the Self constantly. All attachments will die automatically. Attachment to God or

Atman is a potent antidote to annihilate all worldly attachments. He who has no attachment can really love others. He has pure love or divine Prema. Therefore, without attachment, constantly perform action which is duty, for, by performing actions without attachment, man verily reacheth the Supreme. (Chapter III. 19)

The thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth discourses deal with Jnana Yoga. He who has knowledge of Prakriti and Purusha (Nature and God), the three Gunas (qualities of Nature) and their operation, and of the wonderful tree of Maya (illusory power) or the Samsara-Vriksha, can transcend the Prakriti and the Gunas, and cut this marvellous, deep-rooted tree with the sword of wisdom of the Self or the axe of dispassion, and attain Atma-Sakshatkara or direct Self-realisation which releases him from the round of births and deaths. The fifteenth discourse is a soul-elevating one. It contains the essence of Vedanta. He who rightly understands this discourse will soon attain Moksha or the imperishable Seat of Brahman. Get by heart the twenty verses and repeat them before you take your food. All Sannyasins repeat them before they take food.

The eighteenth chapter must be studied again and again. It contains the quintessence of the whole Gita Sastra. It is the supreme pinnacle on the magnificent hill of the knowledge of the Gita. It is the crowning jewel in the priceless necklace and in it is condensed the substance of those teachings found in the first seventeen chapters.

Constant remembrance and practice of the teachings of verses 19, 20, 23, and 24 of chapter II will confer on you Immortality and will remove fear and Dehadhyasa (identification of the Self with the body).

Constant remembrance and practice of the teachings of verse 22 of chapter V: *Ye hi samsparsaja bhogah.......*, verse 8 of chapter XIII: *Indriyartheshu vairagyam......* and verse 38 of chapter XVIII: *Vishayendriya samyogat......* will induce dispassion (Vairagya).

Life in the spirit of verses II. 71, and IV. 39, will give you supreme peace. Verses V. 27, 28, VI. 11 to 14, and 26, VIII. 8, 12, 13 and 14, IX. 34, XII. 8 to 10, XVIII. 51 to 53, deal with Yoga Sadhana or spiritual practice for Self-realisation. The philosophy of the Gita begins from verse II. 11. Verse XVIII. 66 is the most important one in the Gita: "Abandoning all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter; sorrow not; I will liberate thee from all sins." Arjuna asks Lord Krishna: "My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity; my mind is confused as to duty. I ask Thee: tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee." (Chapter II. 17) Lord Krishna gives His answer to this question of Arjuna in verse XVIII. 66. The essence of the whole Gita is contained in verses 65 and 66 of chapter XVIII.

Verse 65 of chapter XVIII contains the essence of Navavidha-Bhakti or the nine modes of devotion. Here is the Sadhana for perfect control of thoughts. By fixing the mind again and again on the Lord, all worldly thoughts die by themselves. Bhakti Yoga can hardly be separated from Raja Yoga. There is a blending of these two Yogas. Patanjali Maharshi says that Samadhi can be attained through devotion unto the Lord: *Isvara-pranidhanadva,* or by self-surrender to the Lord. Self-surrender to the Lord is an important item in the Kriya Yoga and Niyama of Raja Yoga. *Manmana Bhava* is merging the mind. It is a Raja Yoga Sadhana. It is difficult to say where Bhakti Yoga ends and where Raja Yoga begins. Raja Yoga is the fulfilment of Bhakti Yoga. There is no hard and fast rule or line of demarcation between Bhakti Yoga and Raja Yoga. A Raja Yogi is also a Bhakta. A devotee is also a Raja Yogi. There is difference only in name. Lord Krishna gives His word of assurance to Arjuna to encourage him as he is in a despondent and confused state of mind by saying: "Thou shalt come even to Me. I pledge thee My Truth (word); thou art dear to Me." Follow these instructions. He who has practised these four vital instructions will be able to effect unconditioned, unreserved self-surrender.

The next verse contains the essence of self-surrender. The Advaita Vedantin explains the verse thus: "Give up the notion that you are an individual soul. You will attain liberation. You will become a Jivanmukta (a sage liberated while living)." An Acharya (teacher) of the Bhakti cult explains it thus: "Surrender the fruits of all actions and the actions themselves at the Feet of the Lord. The Lord will give you liberation." *Dharma* here cannot signify the Dharma of the senses, because even a Jivanmukta sees, hears, tastes, and so forth; but, he stands as a witness; he does not identify himself with the actions of the senses. In this verse, Lord Krishna gives His definite answer to the query of Arjuna contained in the verse: "My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity; my mind is confused as to duty. I ask Thee: tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee."

You need not study many books on Yoga and Vedanta. If you can live in the true spirit of those two verses, you will attain the *summum bonum* of existence, i.e., immortality, eternal bliss and knowledge of the Self.

"Work without egoism, without expectation of fruits. Surrender the actions and their fruits as offerings unto the Lord. Divinise your life by melting the mind and the ego in the Lord. Spiritualise your life by dedicating your mind and intellect to the Lord (*Macchitta, Yukta, Matparah).* Fix the mind on the Lord. Be devoted to Him. Be intent on the welfare of all beings, *sarvabhutahite ratah.* Sacrifice everything unto the Lord. Then, you will enter into His Being." This is the note ringing throughout the Gita.

Sadhana in the Gita is explained in the following verses:

Karma Yoga: II. 48, IV. 20 to 22 and 24.
Bhakti Yoga: IX. 27, 34, XII. 8, XVIII. 52 to 54.
Japa Yoga: VIII. 14.
Abhyasa Yoga: XII. 9.
Hatha Yoga: VIII. 10, 12.
Raja Yoga: VI. 25, 26.
Jnana Yoga: III. 28, V. 8, 9.

IN DEFENCE

Some people study the Gita in order to find out loopholes in it and criticise the teachings contained in it. The teachings of the Gita can only be understood if you approach it with a reverential attitude of mind and with intense faith.

Someone in a newspaper gave vent to the criticism thus: "The Gita is not a sacred book at all. It teaches violence. Lord Krishna has asked Arjuna to kill even his dear relations and preceptors." It seems that this critic has obviously no real knowledge of the Gita. He is like Virochana who received spiritual instructions from Prajapati and took the body for the Self on account of his perverted intellect. He is obviously a follower of the philosophy of the flesh.

He cannot comprehend the depths of the Gita philosophy as his mind is callous and impervious to the reception of Truth. He has read the Gita not for gaining spiritual knowledge, but for attacking it! If he really understood the right significance of the three verses, viz., "He who regardeth this as a slayer, and he who thinketh he is slain, both of them are ignorant. He slayeth not, nor is He slain." (Chapter II. 19). "Therefore, stand up. By Me they have already been overcome. Be thou the outward cause." (Chapter XI. 33). "He who is free from the egoistic notion, whose intellect is not affected, though he slays these people, he slayeth not, nor is he bound." (Chapter XVIII. 17)—he would not have made this vain criticism. The Universal Being transcends all parochial values.

Just as coloured water penetrates a piece of cloth freely and nicely when it is pure white, so also the instructions of a sage can penetrate and settle down in the hearts of aspirants only when their minds are calm, when there are no desires for enjoyments and when the impurities of their minds are destroyed. That is the reason why an aspirant is expected to possess the qualifications of Viveka (discrimination), Vairagya (dispassion), Sama (control of the mind), Dama (control of the senses), Uparati (turning away from worldly attractions), before he could practise the threefold Sadhana of hearing of the scriptures, reflection, and meditation on them. Discipline and purification of the mind and the senses are the prerequisites in the aspirants on the path of Truth and God-realisation.

Even when the nature of God is explained, those who have not been purged of their faults and impurities, either disbelieve or misbelieve it, as was the case with Indra and Virochana. Therefore, knowledge as inculcated arises only in him who has purified himself by Tapas (austerity), etc., performed either in this or in a previous birth. The Sruti (Upanishad) says: "To that high-souled man whose devotion to his preceptor is as great as that to the Lord, these secrets explained here become illumined."

Some people catch fish in the river Ganga for satisfying their palate and quote the Gita to support their evil action: "Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him." (Chap. II. 23). Wonderful philosophy indeed! Devils also can quote scriptures. These people are also followers of the Virochana school. They are the evil-doing, the deluded and the vilest of men. They cannot understand the teachings of the Gita as their wisdom has been destroyed by illusion and as they have embraced the nature of demons. May the Lord grant them subtle and pure intellect, inner spiritual strength and right understanding to comprehend the teachings of the Gita in their proper light and live in the spirit of the teachings.

Some ignorant people say: "Krishna is not God. He is not an Avatara (incarnation). He was a passionate cow-herd who lustfully played with the Gopis." What was the age of Lord Krishna at that time? Was He not a boy of seven? Could there have been a tinge of passion in Him? Who can understand the secret of Rasa Lila and Madhurya Bhava (the lover-beloved relationship between the devotee and God), the culmination of highest Bhakti, Atma-nivedana or total surrender to the Lord. It is only Narada, Suka Deva, Chaitanya, Mira, Hafiz, Ramananda, the Sakhis or the Gopis that could understand the secret of Rasa Lila. The Sakhis only are qualified for this. Did He not perform miracles when He was a boy? Did He not show that He was the Avatara of Lord Hari? Did He not show His Cosmic Form to His mother when He was a baby? Did He not subdue the Kaliya-serpent by standing on its hood? Did He not multiply Himself as countless Krishnas? Who were the Gopis? Were they not God-intoxicated beings who saw Krishna alone everywhere, who saw themselves also as Krishna? The sound of the Murali could throw them in a state of divine ecstasy or holy communion. They were above body-consciousness.

What is the fate of such people who cavil and carp against the Lord? Just listen. "Those devoid of reason think of Me, the unmanifested, as having manifestation, knowing not My supreme nature, imperishable, most excellent." (Chapter VII. 24) "The foolish disregard Me, when clad in human semblance, ignorant of My supreme nature, the great Lord of beings. Empty of hope, empty of deeds, empty of wisdom, senseless, partaking of the deceitful, brutal and demoniacal nature (chapter IX. 11, 12), they, enwrapped in darkness, think wrong to be right, and see things in a perverted light. These demoniacal men know neither action nor renunciation, neither purity nor right conduct, neither truth nor uprightness. They do not know what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. I ever throw them into demoniacal wombs. Deluded birth after birth, not attaining Me, they sink into the lowest depths." (Chapter XVI. 19, 20)

Some thoughtless people begin to entertain a doubt and say: "How could the Gita have been taught to Arjuna on the battlefield in such a short time? It could not." This is wrong. It was all a revelation to Arjuna. Lord Krishna gave Arjuna the divine eye of intuition. The omniscient, omnipotent Lord can do anything. His Grace can make the dumb man eloquent and the cripple a climber of mountains.

SOLUTION FOR CONFLICTING VERSES

An opponent writes: "In the Gita, chapter III. 33, it is said, 'Even the man of knowledge behaves in conformity with his own nature; beings follow Nature; what shall restraint do?' What is the use of our attempt at controlling the senses and the mind when Nature is all in all? When Nature is all-powerful and overwhelming, how can Sadhana overcome it?"

In the next verse, Lord Krishna distinctly advises us to control Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes). Nature can be subdued by Sadhana. In the study of the Gita, you should not try to confine the meaning to one verse alone. You will have to connect it with the previous and succeeding verses of the same chapter and the verses of the previous chapters. You will also have to make cross-references. Only then will you get the right answer.

Those who disregard the Lord's commandment in III. 30: "Renouncing all actions in Me, with the mind centred in the Self, free from hope and egoism, free from mental fever, do thou fight," and sit quiet renouncing their own duty will not derive any benefit by such renunciation. This Maya is invincible by even wise men: then how much more difficult will it be for worldly men to conquer it! For them, renunciation of work without attainment of knowledge is not desirable. They will be caught in the clutches of Maya. Of what avail is their effort to control the senses or what can restraint do in their case? These worldly men cannot escape the clutches of Raga-Dvesha.

Even the residual Sattvic Vasanas (good tendencies) in Jnanis which keep the body, work in accordance with the qualities of Nature, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Even the wise men are affected by the three Gunas when they are not actually in Samadhi. They have no attachment to the body and other objects of enjoyment and, therefore, they will not be affected mentally. They will be self-contented and self-satisfied. They will not long for objects not attained, nor weep over things lost.

The objector says: "In the Gita, chapter XVIII. 61, Lord Krishna says: 'The Lord dwelleth in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, by His illusive power, causing all beings to revolve, as though mounted on a potter's wheel.' Is man then a perfect slave? Is he like straw tossed about here and there? Has he not got free will to act?"

Lord Krishna tries His level best to persuade Arjuna to do his duty. He wants to extract work from Arjuna. So He speaks of his utter helplessness. In chapter VI. 5, Lord Krishna preaches about Purushartha or right exertion: "*Uddharedatmanatmanam natmanamavasadayet*—Let him raise the self by the Self and let not the self become depressed."

Being under the sway of Nature, the natural Karmas or duties can never be forsaken. One's duty should in no case be ignored. The Lord, the inner ruler, is the director of the individual soul. So long as he is not free from ignorance, he is bound to his own Dharma. Lord Krishna wants to make Arjuna fight as he is a Kshatriya. Elsewhere, the Lord has said: "*Sreyan svadharmah*—one's own duty is good." (XVIII. 47)

The opponent says: "In chapter XV. 7, Lord Krishna says: 'A portion of Mine own Self, transformed in the world of life into an immortal spirit, draweth round itself the five senses with the mind as the sixth, veiled in matter.' It is quite clear that the Jiva (individual soul) is an Amsa or part of Brahman, the Absolute. How can we say that the Jiva is identical with Brahman? The doctrine of Advaita (non-dualism) is wrong."

In chapter VII. 17, the Lord says: "I hold the wise as verily Myself." Here He speaks of identity. The doctrine of non-dualism is quite correct. Non-dualism is the highest realisation. The Lord gives instructions according to the type of the Adhikari (qualified aspirant). Advaita philosophy can be grasped only by the microscopic few. So, He speaks of other kinds of philosophical doctrines in other places, to suit different kinds of aspirants. There is neither Jiva nor Self-realisation from the Absolute viewpoint. Brahman alone exists in reality. Dvaita (dualism), Visishtadvaita (qualified monism), Suddha Advaita (pure monism) are different rungs in the ladder of realisation. The truth is that the Jiva and

Brahman are One in essence. The Dvaitin and the Visishtadvaitin eventually reach the Advaitic goal or Vedantic realisation of Oneness. Do not be confused. Clarify your ideas and understand things in their proper light.

EPILOGUE

India is held in high esteem by the Westerners on account of the Gita. Mahatma Gandhi once visited one of the biggest libraries in London and asked the librarian: "What spiritual book is most often issued?" The librarian replied: "It is the Gita." The Gita is very popular throughout the world. All aspirants should try to get the whole 18 chapters by heart. This can be done through daily Svadhyaya (scriptural study) in about two years, by getting by heart two verses daily.

Study of the Gita must be made compulsory in all schools and colleges of India: nay, of the whole world. It must become a textbook for students of schools and colleges. It must be introduced in their curriculum. It should find a very important place in every scheme of education. Only that system of education wherein moral and spiritual training is imparted along with secular knowledge, can be deemed sound, practical, sensible and perfect.

Everyone of you should study very carefully the Gita, a sublime and soul-stirring book that can bestow on you supreme peace, immortality and eternal bliss.

Hold the magnificent torch of faith. Let float high the unique banner of peace. Carry the magnificent shield of dispassion. Wear the marvellous armour of discrimination. Sing the immortal song of Soham or Sivoham or Radhesyam or Sitaram. March boldly with the band of Pranava, Om, Om. Blow the wonderful conch of courage. Kill the enemies: doubt, ignorance, passion and egoism, and enter the illimitable kingdom of Atman. Taste the divine immortal essence. Drink the nectar of immortality.

My silent adorations to Lord Ganesa, Lord Subrahmanya, Lord Rama, Sita Devi, Sri Sarasvati, Sri Bhagavan Vyasa, Sri Adi Sankaracharya, Padmapadacharya, Hastamalakacharya, Trotakacharya, Suresvaracharya, Sri Jnanadeva, Sri Swami Vishvananda, Sri Swami Vishnudevananda, all the Brahma Vidya Gurus, Saints, Acharyas, all commentators on the Bhagavad Gita, through whose grace and blessings alone I was able to write a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. May their blessings be upon you all.

Glory, glory to the Gita. Glory to Lord Krishna Who has placed the Gita before men of this world for attaining Sreyas or Moksha. May His blessings be upon you all! May the Gita be your centre, ideal and goal! Blessed is the man who studies the Gita daily. Twice blessed is he who lives in the spirit of the Gita. Thrice blessed is he who has realised the knowledge of the Gita, Atmajnana or Self-knowledge!

Om Tat Sat
Om Santih, Santih, Santih

Sivananda

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श्रीगीतामाहात्म्यम्

GLORY OF THE GITA

(To be read at the end of the day's Gita-study)

श्री गणेशाय नमः ।। श्री गोपालकृष्णाय नमः ।।

धरोवाच

भगवन् परमेशान भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
प्रारब्धं भुज्यमानस्य कथं भवति हे प्रभो ।।१।।

Mother Earth said:

1. O Bhagavan! The Supreme Lord! How can unflinching devotion arise in him who is immersed in his Prarabdha Karmas (worldly life), O Lord?

श्रीविष्णुरुवाच

प्रारब्धं भुज्यमानो हि गीताभ्यासरतः सदा ।
स मुक्तः स सुखी लोके कर्मणा नोपलिप्यते ।।२।।

The Lord Vishnu said:

2. Though engaged in the performance of worldly duties, one who is regular in the study of the Gita, becomes free. He is the happy man in this world. He is not bound by Karma.

महापापादिपापानि गीताध्यानं करोति चेत् ।
क्वचित्स्पर्शं न कुर्वन्ति नलिनीदलमम्बुवत् ।।३।।

3. Just as the water stains not the lotus-leaf, even so, sins do not taint him who is regular in the recitation of the Gita.

गीतायाः पुस्तकं यत्र यत्र पाठः प्रवर्तते ।
तत्र सर्वाणि तीर्थानि प्रयागादीनि तत्र वै ।।४।।

4. All the sacred places of pilgrimage like Prayaga and others, dwell in that place where the book, the Gita, is kept, and where the Gita is read.

सर्वे देवाश्च ऋषयो योगिनः पन्नगाश्च ये ।
गोपाला गोपिका वापि नारदोद्धवपार्षदैः ।।५।।

5. All the gods, sages, Yogins, divine serpents, Gopalas, Gopikas (friends and devotees of Lord Krishna), Narada, Uddhava and others (dwell here).

सहायो जायते शीघ्रं यत्र गीता प्रवर्तते ।
यत्र गीताविचारश्च पठनं पाठनं श्रुतम् ।
तत्राहं निश्चितं पृथ्वि निवसामि सदैव हि ॥६॥

6. Help comes quickly where the Gita is recited and, O Earth, I dwell at all times where the Gita is read, heard, taught and contemplated upon.

गीताश्रयेऽहं तिष्ठामि गीता मे चोत्तमं गृहम् ।
गीताज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य त्रींल्लोकान्पालयाम्यहम् ॥७॥

7. I reside in the Gita and the Gita is My best abode. I protect the three worlds with the knowledge of the Gita.

गीता मे परमा विद्या ब्रह्मरूपा न संशयः ।
अर्धमात्राक्षरा नित्या स्वानिर्वाच्यपदात्मिका ॥८॥

8. The Gita is My highest science, which is, without doubt, of the form of Brahman, the eternal, the Ardhamatra (of the Pranava Om), the ineffable splendour of the Self.

चिदानन्देन कृष्णेन प्रोक्ता स्वमुखतोऽर्जुनम् ।
वेदत्रयी परानन्दा तत्त्वार्थज्ञानसंयुता ॥९॥

9. It was spoken by the blessed Krishna, the all-knowing, with His own mouth to Arjuna. It contains the essence of the three Vedas, the knowledge of the Reality. It is full of supreme bliss.

योऽष्टादश जपेन्नित्यं नरो निश्चलमानसः ।
ज्ञानसिद्धिं स लभते ततो याति परं पदम् ॥१०॥

10. He who recites the eighteen chapters of the Gita daily, with a pure, unshaken mind, attains perfection in knowledge and reaches the highest state or supreme goal.

पाठेऽसमर्थः संपूर्णे ततोऽर्द्धं पाठमाचरेत् ।
तदा गोदानजं पुण्यं लभते नात्र संशयः ॥११॥

11. If a complete reading is not possible, even if only half of

it is read, he attains the benefit of giving a cow as a gift. There is no doubt about this.

त्रिभागं पठमानस्तु गङ्गास्नानफलं लभेत् ।
षडंशं जपमानस्तु सोमयागफलं लभेत् ॥१२॥

12. He who recites one-third part of it achieves the merit of a bath in the sacred Ganga, and who recites one-sixth of it attains the merit of performing a Soma-sacrifice (a ritual).

एकाध्यायं तु यो नित्यं पठते भक्तिसंयुतः ।
रुद्रलोकमवाप्नोति गणो भूत्वा वसेच्चिरम् ॥१३॥

13. That person who reads one chapter with great devotion attains the world of Rudra and, having become a Gana (attendant of Lord Siva), lives there for many years.

अध्यायं श्लोकपादं वा नित्यं यः पठते नरः ।
स याति नरतां यावन्मन्वन्तरं वसुन्धरे ॥१४॥

14. If one reads a chapter or even a part of a verse daily, he, O Earth, retains a human body till the end of a Manvantara (71 Mahayugas or 308,448,000 years).

गीतायाः श्लोकदशकं सप्त पञ्च चतुष्टयम् ।
द्वौ त्रीनेकं तदर्धं वा श्लोकानां यः पठेन्नरः ॥१५॥
चन्द्रलोकमवाप्नोति वर्षाणामयुतं ध्रुवम् ।
गीतापाठसमायुक्तो मृतो मानुषतां व्रजेत् ॥१६॥

15, 16. He who repeats ten, seven, five, four, three, two verses or even one or half of a verse, attains the region of the moon and lives there for 10,000 years. Accustomed to the daily study of the Gita, a person, after death, is born again as a human being.

गीताभ्यासं पुनः कृत्वा लभते मुक्तिमुत्तमाम् ।
गीतेत्युच्चारसंयुक्तो म्रियमाणो गतिं लभेत् ॥१७॥

17. By repeated study of the Gita, one attains the highest liberation. Uttering “Gita” at the time of death, he attains the Goal (of life).

गीतार्थश्रवणासक्तो महापापयुतोऽपि वा ।
वैकुण्ठं समवाप्नोति विष्णुना सह मोदते ॥१८॥

18. Though full of sins, one who is ever intent on hearing the meaning of the Gita, goes to the kingdom of God and rejoices with Lord Vishnu.

गीतार्थं ध्यायते नित्यं कृत्वा कर्माणि भूरिशः ।
जीवन्मुक्तः स विज्ञेयो देहान्ते परमं पदम् ।।१९।।

19. He who meditates on the meaning of the Gita, having performed a great number of good actions, attains the supreme Goal after death. Such a man should be known as a Jivanmukta (a person liberated while living).

मलनिर्मोचनं पुंसां जलस्नानं दिने दिने ।
सकृद्गीताम्भसि स्नानं संसारमलनाशनम् ।।२०।।

20. A daily bath in water cleanses people of their bodily dirt; a bath taken once in the waters of the Gita cleanses them of the dirt of Samsara.

गीतामाश्रित्य बहवो भूभुजो जनकादयः ।
निर्धूतकल्मषा लोके गीता याताः परं पदम् ।।२१।।

21. In this world, taking refuge in the Gita many kings like Janaka and others have reached the highest state or goal, purified of all sins. It is so sung.

ये शृण्वन्ति पठन्त्येव गीताशास्त्रमहर्निशम् ।
न ते वै मानुषा ज्ञेया देवा एव न संशयः ।।२२।।

22. Those who hear or read day and night the scripture Gita should not be regarded as human beings; they are verily gods.

ज्ञानाज्ञानकृतं नित्यमिन्द्रियैर्जनितं च यत् ।
तत्सर्वं नाशमायाति गीतापाठेन तत्क्षणम् ।।२३।।

23. All sins whether committed knowingly or unknowingly, through senses or otherwise, get destroyed instantaneously by a constant study of the Gita.

धिक् तस्य ज्ञानमाचारं व्रतं चेष्टां तपो यशः ।
गीतार्थपठनं नास्ति नाधमस्तत्परो जनः ।।२४।।

24. Fie on the learning, conduct, observances, activity,

austerity and renown of that person who has not studied the Gita; he is lowly indeed.

संसारसागरं घोरं तर्तुमिच्छति यो जनः ।
गीतानावं समारुह्य पारं याति सुखेन सः ॥२५॥

25. He who wishes to cross the fearful ocean of Samsara reaches its other shore easily by mounting on the boat of the Gita.

गीतायाः पठनं कृत्वा माहात्म्यं नैव यः पठेत् ।
वृथा पाठो भवेत्तस्य श्रम एव ह्युदाहृतः ॥२६॥

26. He who fails to read this Glory of the Gita (the Gita Mahatmyam), after having read the Gita, loses the benefit thereby, and the effort alone remains.

This is to test and confirm the faith of the reader in the Gita. It is not a mere book but the Word of God and should therefore be studied with great faith and devotion which this Mahatmyam generates in one's heart.

एतन्माहात्म्यसंयुक्तं गीताभ्यासं करोति यः ।
स तत्फलमवाप्नोति दुर्लभां गतिमाप्नुयात् ॥२७॥

27. One who studies the Gita, together with this Glory of the Gita, attains the fruit mentioned above and reaches the state which is otherwise very difficult to be attained.

सूत उवाच

माहात्म्यमेतद्गीतायाः मया प्रोक्तं सनातनम् ।
गीतान्ते च पठेद्यस्तु यदुक्तं तत्फलं लभेत् ॥२८॥

Suta said:

28. This greatness or Glory of the Gita which is eternal, as narrated by me, should be read at the end of the study of the Gita and the fruits mentioned therein will be obtained.

इति श्रीवराहपुराणे श्रीगीतामाहात्म्यं सम्पूर्णम् ।

Thus ends the Glory of the Gita, contained in the Varaha Purana.

Om Santih, Santih, Santih.

श्रीगीताकरादिन्यासः

श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगोपालकृष्णाय नमः ॥

ॐ अस्य श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतामालामन्त्रस्य भगवान्वेदव्यास ऋषिः । अनुष्टुप्छन्दः । श्रीकृष्णः परमात्मा देवता ॥ अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे इति बीजम् । सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज इति शक्तिः ॥ अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः इति कीलकम् । नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावक इत्यंगुष्ठाभ्यां नमः ॥ न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुत इति तर्जनीभ्यां नमः ॥ अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च इति मध्यमाभ्यां नमः ॥ नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातन इत्यनामिकाभ्यां नमः ॥ पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रश इति कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः ॥ नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च इति करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ॥ इति करन्यासः ॥ अथ हृदयादिन्यासः ॥ नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावक इति हृदयाय नमः ॥ न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुत इति शिरसे स्वाहा ॥ अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च इति शिखायै वषट् ॥ नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातन इति कवचाय हुम् । पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रश इति नेत्रत्रयाय वौषट् ॥ नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च इति अस्त्राय फट् ॥ श्रीकृष्णप्रीत्यर्थे पाठे विनियोगः ॥

श्रीगीताध्यानम्

MEDITATION ON THE GITA

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयम्
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्येमहाभारतम् ।
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीमष्टादशाध्यायिनी-
मम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥१॥

ॐ Om (the monosyllable indicative of the Supreme Brahman), पार्थाय प्रतिबोधिताम् with which Partha (Arjuna) was illumined, भगवता by the Lord, नारायणेन by Narayana, स्वयम् Himself, व्यासेन by Vyasa, ग्रथिताम् composed, पुराणमुनिना by the ancient Muni, मध्येमहाभारतम् in the midst of Mahabharata, अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीम् the showerer of the nectar of Advaita, भगवतीम् the Divine Mother, अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् in the form of eighteen chapters, अम्ब affectionate Mother, त्वाम् Thee, अनुसन्दधामि I meditate, भगवद्गीते O Bhagavad Gita, भवद्वेषिणीम् destroyer of rebirth.

1. Om, O Bhagavad Gita, with which Partha (Arjuna) was illumined by Lord Narayana Himself and which was composed in the middle of the Mahabharata by the ancient sage Vyasa, O Divine Mother, the destroyer of rebirth, the showerer of the nectar of Advaita (teaching on the Oneness of all things) and consisting of eighteen chapters—upon Thee, O Bhagavad Gita! O affectionate mother! I meditate.

नमोऽस्तु ते व्यास विशालबुद्धे फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र ।
येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥२॥

नमः salutation, अस्तु be, ते unto thee, व्यास (O) Vyasa, विशालबुद्धे of broad intellect, फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र with eyes like the petals of a full-blown lotus, येन by which, त्वया by thee, भारततैलपूर्णः full of the oil of the Mahabharata, प्रज्वालितः lighted, ज्ञानमयः consisting of wisdom, प्रदीपः lamp.

2. Salutations unto thee, O Vyasa of broad intellect and with

eyes like the petals of full-blown lotus, by whom the lamp of knowledge, filled with the oil of the Mahabharata, has been lighted.

प्रपन्नपारिजाताय तोत्रवेत्रैकपाणये ।
ज्ञानमुद्राय कृष्णाय गीतामृतदुहे नमः ॥३॥

प्रपन्नपारिजाताय the Parijata, or the Kalpataru, the bestower of all desires, for those who take refuge in Him, तोत्रवेत्रैकपाणये who holds a whip in one hand, ज्ञानमुद्राय the holder of knowledge-symbol, कृष्णाय to Krishna, गीतामृतदुहे the milker of the Gita Nectar, नमः salutation.

3. Salutations to Krishna, the Parijata tree or the Kalpataru or the bestower of all desires for those who take refuge in Him, the holder of the whip in one hand, the wielder of the symbol of knowledge, and the milker of the nectar of the Bhagavad Gita.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥४॥

सर्वोपनिषदः all the Upanishads, गावः the cows, दोग्धा the milker, गोपालनन्दनः Krishna, the cowherd boy, पार्थः Arjuna, वत्सः the calf, सुधीः (man) of purified intellect, भोक्ता the drinker, दुग्धम् the milk, गीता Gita, अमृतम् nectar, महत् the great.

4. All the Upanishads are the cows; the Milker is Krishna, the cowherd-boy; Partha (Arjuna) is the calf; men of purified intellect are the drinkers, the milk is the great nectar of the Gita.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥५॥

वसुदेवसुतम् the son of Vasudeva, देवम् God, कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura, देवकीपरमानन्दम् the Supreme bliss of Devaki (mother of Krishna), कृष्णम् to Krishna, वन्दे I salute, जगद्गुरुम् the world-teacher.

5. I salute Lord Krishna, the world-teacher, the son of Vasudeva, the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura, the supreme bliss of Devaki.

भीष्मद्रोणतटा जयद्रथजला गान्धारनीलोत्पला
शल्यग्राहवती कृपेण वहनी कर्णेन वेलाकुला ।
अश्वत्थामविकर्णघोरमकरा दुर्योधनावर्तिनी
सोत्तीर्णा खलु पाण्डवै रणनदी कैवर्तकः केशवः ॥६॥

भीष्मद्रोणतटा with Bhishma and Drona as the banks, जयद्रथजला with Jayadratha as the water, गान्धारनीलोत्पला with the king of Gandhara as the blue water-lily, शल्यग्राहवती with Salya as the crocodile, कृपेण वहनी with Kripa as the current, कर्णेन वेलाकुला with Karna as the billow, अश्वत्थामविकर्णघोरमकरा with Asvatthama and Vikarna as terrible alligators, दुर्योधनावर्तिनी with Duryodhana as the whirlpool, सः that, उत्तीर्णा crossed over, खलु indeed, पाण्डवैः by Pandavas, रणनदी the battle-river, कैवर्तकः the helmsman, केशवः Kesava (Krishna).

6. With Kesava as the helmsman, verily was crossed by the Pandavas, the battle-river whose banks were Bhishma and Drona, whose water was Jayadratha, whose blue lotus was the king of Gandhara, whose crocodile was Salya, whose current was Kripa, whose billow was Karna, whose terrible alligators were Asvatthama and Vikarna, whose whirlpool was Duryodhana.

पाराशर्यवचःसरोजममलं गीतार्थगन्धोत्कटं
नानाख्यानककेसरं हरिकथासम्बोधनाबोधितम् ।
लोके सज्जनषट्पदैरहरहः पेपीयमानं मुदा
भूयाद्भारतपङ्कजं कलिमलप्रध्वंसिनः श्रेयसे ॥७॥

पाराशर्यवचःसरोजम् born in the lake of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa), अमलम् spotless, गीतार्थगन्धोत्कटम् sweet with the fragrance of the meaning of the Gita, नानाख्यानककेसरम् with many stories as its stamens, हरिकथासम्बोधनाबोधितम्· fully opened by the discourses on Hari, लोके in the world, सज्जनषट्पदैः by the bees of good men, अहरहः day by day, पेपीयमानम् drunk, मुदा joyously, भूयात् may be, भारतपङ्कजम् the lotus of the Mahabharata, कलिमलप्रध्वंसि the destroyer of the dirt of Kali age, नः to us, श्रेयसे for the supreme good.

7. May this lotus of the Mahabharata, born in the lake of the words of Vyasa, sweet with the fragrance of the meaning of the Gita, with many stories as its stamens, fully opened by the discourses on Hari, the destroyer of the sins of the Kali age, and drunk joyously by the bees of good men in the world, day by day, become the bestower of good to us.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् ।
यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्दमाधवम् ॥८॥

मूकम् the dumb, करोति makes, वाचालम् eloquent, पङ्गुम् the cripple, लङ्घयते enables to climb, गिरिम् mountain, यत्कृपा whose grace, तम् that, अहम् I, वन्दे salute, परमानन्दमाधवम् Madhava, the source of supreme Bliss.

8. I salute that Madhava, the source of supreme bliss, whose grace makes the dumb man eloquent and the cripple cross mountains.

यं ब्रह्मावरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवै-
र्वेदैः सांगपदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं सामगाः ।
ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो
यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥९॥

यम् whom, ब्रह्मावरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and Maruts, स्तुन्वन्ति praise, दिव्यैः divine, स्तवैः with hymns, वेदैः with the Vedas, सांगपदक्रमोपनिषदैः with their Angas in the Pada and Krama methods and by the Upanishads, गायन्ति sing, यम् whom, सामगाः the Sama-chanters, ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा with the mind absorbed in Him through meditation, पश्यन्ति see, यम् whom, योगिनः the Yogins, यस्य whose, अन्तम् end, न not, विदुः know, सुरासुरगणाः the hosts of Devas and Asuras, देवाय to God, तस्मै that, नमः salutation.

9. Salutations to that God Whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise with divine hymns, of Whom the Sama-chanters sing by the Vedas and their Angas, in the Pada and the Krama methods, and by the Upanishads, Whom the Yogins see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and Whose end the hosts of Devas and Asuras know not.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA

ॐ

Om Sri Sadguru Paramatmane Namah

अथ प्रथमोऽध्यायः

FIRST DISCOURSE

अर्जुनविषादयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥१॥

धर्मक्षेत्रे on the holy plain, कुरुक्षेत्रे in Kurukshetra, समवेताः assembled together, युयुत्सवः desirous to fight, मामकाः my people, पाण्डवाः the sons of Pandu, च and, एव also, किम् what, अकुर्वत did do, सञ्जय O Sanjaya.

Dhritarashtra said:

1. What did my people and the sons of Pandu do when they had assembled together eager for battle on the holy plain of Kurukshetra, O Sanjaya?

Commentary: *Dharmakshetra*—that place which protects Dharma is Dharmakshetra. Because it was in the land of the Kurus, it was called *Kurukshetra.*

Sanjaya is one who has conquered likes and dislikes and who is impartial.

सञ्जय उवाच

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२॥

दृष्ट्वा having seen, तु indeed, पाण्डवानीकम् the army of the Pandavas, व्यूढम् drawn up in battle-array, दुर्योधनः Duryodhana, तदा then, आचार्यम् the teacher, उपसङ्गम्य having approached, राजा the king, वचनम् speech, अब्रवीत् said.

Sanjaya said:

2. Having seen the army of the Pandavas drawn up in battle-array, King Duryodhana then approached his teacher (Drona) and spoke these words.

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥३॥

पश्य behold, एताम् this, पाण्डुपुत्राणाम् of the sons of Pandu, आचार्य O Teacher, महतीम् great, चमूम् army, व्यूढाम् arrayed, द्रुपदपुत्रेण son of Drupada, तव शिष्येण by your disciple, धीमता wise.

3. "Behold, O Teacher! this mighty army of the sons of Pandu, arrayed by the son of Drupada, thy wise disciple.

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥४॥

अत्र here, शूराः heroes, महेष्वासाः mighty archers, भीमार्जुनसमाः equal to Bhima and Arjuna, युधि in battle, युयुधानः Yuyudhana, विराटः Virata, च and, द्रुपदः Drupada, च and, महारथः of the great car.

4. "Here are heroes, mighty archers, equal in battle to Bhima and Arjuna, Yuyudhana (Satyaki), Virata and Drupada, of the great car (mighty warriors).

Commentary: Technically, *maharatha* means a warrior who is proficient in the science of war and who is able to fight alone with ten thousand archers.

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥५॥

धृष्टकेतुः Dhrishtaketu, चेकितानः Chekitana, काशिराजः king of Kasi, च and, वीर्यवान् valiant, पुरुजित् Purujit, कुन्तिभोजः Kuntibhoja, च and, शैब्यः son of Sibi, च and, नरपुङ्गवः the best of men.

5. "Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana and the valiant king of Kasi, Purujit and Kuntibhoja and Saibya, the best of men.

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥६॥

युधामन्युः Yudhamanyu, च and, विक्रान्तः the strong, उत्तमौजाः Uttamaujas, च and, वीर्यवान् the brave, सौभद्रः the son of Subhadra, द्रौपदेयाः the sons of Draupadi, च and, सर्वे all, एव even, महारथाः great car-warriors.

6. "The strong Yudhamanyu and the brave Uttamaujas, the son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadra and Arjuna), and the sons of Draupadi, all of great chariots (great heroes).

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥७॥

अस्माकम् ours, तु also, विशिष्टाः the best, ये who (those), तान् those, निबोध know (thou), द्विजोत्तम (O) best among the twice-born ones, नायकाः the leaders, मम my, सैन्यस्य of the army, संज्ञार्थम् for information, तान् them, ब्रवीमि speak, ते to thee.

7. "Know also, O best among the twice-born! the names of those who are the most distinguished amongst ourselves, the leaders of my army; these I name to thee for thy information.

भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिञ्जयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥८॥

भवान् yourself, भीष्मः Bhishma, च and, कर्णः Karna, च and, कृपः Kripa, च and, समितिञ्जयः victorious in war, अश्वत्थामा Asvatthama, the son of Dronacharya, विकर्णः Vikarna, च and, सौमदत्तिः the son of Somadatta, तथा thus, एव even, च and.

8. "Thyself and Bhishma, and Karna and also Kripa, the victorious in war, Asvatthama, Vikarna, and also Bhurisrava, the son of Somadatta.

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥९॥

अन्ये others, च and, बहवः many, शूराः heroes, मदर्थे for my sake, त्यक्तजीविताः who are ready to give up their lives, नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः armed with various weapons and missiles, सर्वे all, युद्धविशारदाः well-skilled in battle.

9. "And also many other heroes who are ready to give up their lives for my sake, armed with various weapons and missiles, all well-skilled in battle.

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥१०॥

अपर्याप्तम् insufficient, तत् that, अस्माकम् ours, बलम् army, भीष्माभिरक्षितम् marshalled by Bhishma, पर्याप्तम् sufficient, तु while, इदम् this, एतेषाम् their, बलम् army, भीमाभिरक्षितम् marshalled by Bhima.

10. "This army of ours marshalled by Bhishma is insufficient, whereas that army of theirs marshalled by Bhima is sufficient.

Commentary: The verse is differently interpreted by different commentators. Sridhara Swami takes the word *aparyaptam* to mean 'insufficient'. Ananda Giri takes it to mean 'unlimited'.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥११॥

अयनेषु in the arrays (of the army), च and, सर्वेषु in all, यथाभागम् according to division, अवस्थिताः being stationed, भीष्मम् Bhishma, एव alone, अभिरक्षन्तु protect, भवन्तः ye, सर्वे all, एव even, हि indeed.

11. "Therefore, do ye all, stationed in your respective positions, in the several divisions of the army, protect Bhishma alone."

तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥१२॥

तस्य his (Duryodhana's), संजनयन् causing, हर्षम् joy, कुरुवृद्धः oldest of the Kurus, पितामहः grandfather, सिंहनादम् lion's roar, विनद्य

having sounded, उच्चैः loudly, शङ्खम् conch, दध्मौ blew, प्रतापवान् the glorious.

12. His glorious grandsire (Bhishma), the oldest of the Kauravas, in order to cheer Duryodhana, now roared like a lion, and blew his conch.

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥१३॥

ततः then, शङ्खाः conches, च and, भेर्यः kettledrums, च and, पणवानकगोमुखाः tabors, drums and cow-horns, सहसा एव quite suddenly, अभ्यहन्यन्त blared forth, सः that, शब्दः sound, तुमुलः tremendous, अभवत् was.

13. Then (following Bhishma), conches and kettledrums, tabors, drums and cow-horns blared forth quite suddenly (from the Kaurava side) and the sound was tremendous.

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥१४॥

ततः then, श्वेतैः (with) white, हयैः horses, युक्ते yoked, महति magnificent, स्यन्दने in the chariot, स्थितौ seated, माधवः Madhava, पाण्डवः Pandava, the son of Pandu, च and, एव also, दिव्यौ divine, शङ्खौ conches, प्रदध्मतुः blew.

14. Then, also, Madhava (Krishna) and the son of Pandu (Arjuna), seated in the magnificent chariot, yoked with white horses, blew their divine conches.

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥१५॥

पाञ्चजन्यम् (the conch named) Panchajanya, हृषीकेशः (the Lord of the senses) Krishna, देवदत्तम् (the conch named) Devadatta, धनंजयः (the victor of wealth) Arjuna, पौण्ड्रम् (the conch named) Poundra, दध्मौ blew, महाशङ्खम् great conch, भीमकर्मा doer of terrible deeds, वृकोदरः (having the belly of a wolf) Bhima.

15. Hrishikesha blew the Panchajanya and Arjuna blew the Devadatta and Bhima (the wolf-bellied), the doer of terrible deeds, blew the great conch Paundra.

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥१६॥

अनन्तविजयम् (the conch named) Anantavijayam, राजा the king, कुन्तीपुत्रः son of Kunti, युधिष्ठिरः Yudhishthira, नकुलः Nakula, सहदेवः Sahadeva, च and, सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ (the conches named) Sughosha and Manipushpaka.

16. The king Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughosha and the Manipushpaka.

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥१७॥

काश्यः Kasya, the king of Kasi, च and, परमेष्वासः an excellent archer, शिखण्डी Sikhandi, च and, महारथः mighty car-warrior, धृष्टद्युम्नः Dhrishtadyumna, विराटः Virata, च and, सात्यकिः Satyaki, च and, अपराजितः unconquered.

17. The king of Kasi, an excellent archer, Sikhandi, the mighty car-warrior, Dhrishtadyumna and Virata and Satyaki, the unconquered,

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥१८॥

द्रुपदः Drupada, द्रौपदेयाः the sons of Draupadi, च and, सर्वशः all, पृथिवीपते O Lord of the earth, सौभद्रः the son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu), च and, महाबाहुः the mighty-armed, शङ्खान् conches, दध्मुः blew, पृथक् पृथक् separately.

18. Drupada and the sons of Draupadi, O Lord of the earth, and the son of Subhadra, the mighty-armed, blew their conches separately.

Commentary: This blowing of conches announced the commencement of the battle.

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ।।१९।।

सः that, घोषः uproar, धार्तराष्ट्राणाम् of Dhritarashtra's party, हृदयानि hearts, व्यदारयत् rent, नभः sky, च and, पृथिवीम् earth, च and, एव also, तुमुलः tumultuous, व्यनुनादयन् resounding.

19. That tumultuous sound rent the hearts of (the members of) Dhritarashtra's party, making both the heaven and the earth resound.

अथ व्यवस्थितान् दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।।२०।।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अथ now, व्यवस्थितान् standing arrayed, दृष्ट्वा seeing, धार्तराष्ट्रान् Dhritarashtra's party, कपिध्वजः monkey-ensigned, प्रवृत्ते about to begin, शस्त्रसंपाते discharge of weapons, धनुः bow, उद्यम्य having taken up, पाण्डवः the son of Pandu, हृषीकेशम् to Hrishikesha, तदा then, वाक्यम् word, इदम् this, आह said, महीपते O Lord of the earth.

20. Then, seeing the people of Dhritarashtra's party standing arrayed and the discharge of weapons about to begin, Arjuna, the son of Pandu, whose ensign was a monkey, took up his bow and said the following to Krishna, O Lord of the earth.

अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ।।२१।।
यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्रणसमुद्यमे ।।२२।।

सेनयोः of the armies, उभयोः of both, मध्ये in the middle, रथम् car, स्थापय place, मे my, अच्युत O Achyuta (O changeless, Krishna), यावत् while, एतान् these, निरीक्षे behold, अहम् I, योद्धुकामान् desirous to fight, अवस्थितान् standing, कैः with whom, मया by me, सह together, योद्धव्यम् must be fought, अस्मिन् in this, रणसमुद्यमे eve of battle.

Arjuna said:

21, 22. In the middle between the two armies, place my chariot, O Krishna, so that I may behold those who stand here desirous to fight, and know with whom I must fight, when the battle is about to commence.

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥२३॥

योत्स्यमानान् with the object of fighting, अवेक्षे observe, अहम् I, ये who, एते those, अत्र here (in this Kurukshetra), समागताः assembled, धार्तराष्ट्रस्य of the son of Dhritarashtra, दुर्बुद्धेः of the evil-minded, युद्धे in battle, प्रियचिकीर्षवः wishing to please.

23. For I desire to observe those who are assembled here to fight, wishing to please in battle the evil-minded Duryodhana (the son of Dhritarashtra).

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥२४॥

एवम् thus, उक्तः addressed, हृषीकेशः Hrishikesha, गुडाकेशेन by Gudakesha (the conqueror of sleep, Arjuna), भारत O Bharata (descendant of king Bharata, Dhritarashtra), सेनयोः of the armies, उभयोः of both, मध्ये in the middle, स्थापयित्वा having stationed, रथोत्तमम् best of chariots.

Sanjaya said:

24. Thus addressed by Arjuna, Krishna, having stationed that best of chariots, O Dhritarashtra, in the midst of the two armies,

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरूनिति ॥२५॥

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः in front of Bhishma and Drona, सर्वेषाम् of all, च and, महीक्षिताम् rulers of the earth, उवाच said, पार्थ O Partha, पश्य behold, एतान् these, समवेतान् gathered, कुरून् Kurus, इति thus.

25. In front of Bhishma and Drona, and all the rulers of the earth, said: "O Arjuna (son of Pritha), behold these Kurus gathered together."

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितॄनथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातॄन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥२६॥

तत्र there, अपश्यत् saw, स्थितान् stationed, पार्थः Partha, पितॄन् fathers, अथ also, पितामहान् grandfathers, आचार्यान् teachers, मातुलान् maternal uncles, भ्रातॄन् brothers, पुत्रान् sons, पौत्रान् grandsons, सखीन् friends, तथा too.

26. Then, Arjuna (son of Pritha) saw there (in the armies) stationed, fathers and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and friends too.

श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।
तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ॥२७॥
कृपया परयाऽऽविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

श्वशुरान् fathers-in-law, सुहृदः friends, च and, एव also, सेनयोः in armies, उभयोः (in) both, अपि also, तान् those, समीक्ष्य having seen, सः he, कौन्तेयः Kaunteya, सर्वान् all, बन्धून् relatives, अवस्थितान् standing (arrayed), कृपया by pity, परया deep, आविष्टः filled, विषीदन् sorrowfully, इदम् this, अब्रवीत् said.

27. (He saw) fathers-in-law and friends also in both the armies. The son of Kunti, Arjuna, seeing all those kinsmen thus standing arrayed, spoke this, sorrowfully filled with deep pity.

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥२८॥

दृष्ट्वा having seen, इमम् these, स्वजनम् kinsmen, कृष्ण O Krishna (the dark one, He who attracts), युयुत्सुम् eager to fight, समुपस्थितम् arrayed.

Arjuna said:

28. Seeing these, my kinsmen, O Krishna, arrayed, eager to fight,

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।
वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥२९॥

सीदन्ति fail, मम my, गात्राणि limbs, मुखम् mouth, च and, परिशुष्यति is parching, वेपथुः shivering, च and, शरीरे in body, मे my, रोमहर्षः horripilation, च and, जायते arises.

29. My limbs fail and my mouth is parched, my body quivers and my hair stands on end,

गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।
न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥३०॥

गाण्डीवम् Gandiva, स्रंसते slips, हस्तात् from (my) hand, त्वक् (my) skin, च and, एव also, परिदह्यते burns all over, न not, च and, शक्नोमि (I) am able, अवस्थातुम् to stand, भ्रमति इव seems whirling, च and, मे my, मनः mind.

30. The (bow) Gandiva slips from my hand, and also my skin burns all over; I am unable even to stand and my mind is reeling, as it were.

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।
न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥३१॥

निमित्तानि omens, च and, पश्यामि I see, विपरीतानि adverse, केशव O Kesava, न not, च and, श्रेयः good, अनुपश्यामि (I) see, हत्वा killing, स्वजनम् our people, आहवे in battle.

31. And I see adverse omens, O Kesava. I do not see any good in killing my kinsmen in battle.

Commentary: *Kesava* means 'he who has fine or luxuriant hair'.

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥३२॥

न not, काङ्क्षे (I) desire, विजयम् victory, कृष्ण O Krishna, न not, च and, राज्यम् kingdom, सुखानि pleasures, च and, किम् what, नः to us, राज्येन by kingdom, गोविन्द O Govinda, किम् what, भोगैः by pleasures, जीवितेन life, वा or.

32. I desire not victory, O Krishna, nor kingdom, pleasures. Of what avail is dominion to us, O Krishna, or pleasures or even life?

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ।।३३।।

येषाम् of whose, अर्थे sake, काङ्क्षितम् (is) desired, नः by us, राज्यम् kingdom, भोगाः enjoyment, सुखानि pleasures, च and, ते they, इमे these, अवस्थिताः stand, युद्धे in battle, प्राणान् life, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, धनानि wealth, च and.

33. Those for whose sake we desire kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures, stand here in battle, having renounced life and wealth.

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ।।३४।।

आचार्याः teachers, पितरः fathers, पुत्राः sons, तथा thus, एव also, च and, पितामहाः grandfathers, मातुलाः maternal uncles, श्वशुराः fathers-in-law, पौत्राः grandsons, श्यालाः brothers-in-law, सम्बन्धिनः relatives, तथा as well as.

34. Teachers, fathers, sons and also grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives,—

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ।।३५।।

एतान् these, न not, हन्तुम् to kill, इच्छामि (I) wish, घ्नतःअपि even if they kill me, मधुसूदन O Madhusudana (the slayer of Madhu, a demon), अपि even, त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य dominion over the three worlds, हेतोः for the sake of, किम् how, नु then, महीकृते for the sake of the earth.

35. These I do not wish to kill, though they kill me, O Krishna, even for the sake of dominion over the three worlds; leave alone killing them for the sake of the earth.

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।
पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥३६॥

निहत्य having slain, धार्तराष्ट्रान् sons of Dhritarashtra, नः to us, का what, प्रीतिः pleasure, स्यात् may be, जनार्दन O Janardana, पापम् sin, एव only, आश्रयेत् would take hold, अस्मान् to us, हत्वा having killed, एतान् these, आततायिनः felons.

36. By killing these sons of Dhritarashtra, what pleasure can be ours, O Janardana? Only sin will accrue to us from killing these felons.

Commentary: *'Janardana'* means 'one who is worshipped by all for prosperity and salvation'—Krishna.

He who sets fire to the house of another, who gives poison, who runs with sword to kill, who has plundered wealth and lands, and who has taken hold of the wife of somebody else is an *atatayi*. Duryodhana had done *all* these evil actions.

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्स्वबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥३७॥

तस्मात् therefore, न (are) not, अर्हाः justified, वयम् we, हन्तुम् to kill, धार्तराष्ट्रान् the sons of Dhritarashtra, स्वबान्धवान् our relatives, स्वजनम् kinsmen, हि indeed, कथम् how, हत्वा having killed, सुखिनः happy, स्याम may (we) be, माधव O Madhava.

37. Therefore, we should not kill the sons of Dhritarashtra, our relatives; for how can we be happy by killing our own people, O Madhava (Krishna)?

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥३८॥

यद्यपि though, एते these, न not, पश्यन्ति see, लोभोपहतचेतसः with intelligence overpowered by greed, कुलक्षयकृतम् in the destruction of families, दोषम् evil, मित्रद्रोहे in hostility to friends, च and, पातकम् sin.

38. Though they, with intelligence overpowered by greed, see no evil in the destruction of families, and no sin in hostility to friends,

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ।।३९।।

कथम् why, न not, ज्ञेयम् should be learnt, अस्माभिः by us, पापात् from sin, अस्मात् this, निवर्तितुम् to turn away, कुलक्षयकृतम् in the destruction of families, दोषम् evil, प्रपश्यद्भिः clearly seeing, जनार्दन O Janardana.

39. Why should not we who clearly see evil in the destruction of families, learn to turn away from this sin, O Janardana (Krishna)?

Commentary: Ignorance of law is no excuse; but wanton sinful conduct is a grave crime, unworthy of us, who are wiser.

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ।।४०।।

कुलक्षये in the destruction of a family, प्रणश्यन्ति perish, कुलधर्माः family religious rites, सनातनाः immemorial, धर्मे spirituality, नष्टे being destroyed, कुलम् कृत्स्नम् the whole family, अधर्मः impiety, अभिभवति overcomes, उत indeed.

40. In the destruction of a family, the immemorial religious rites of that family perish; on the destruction of spirituality, impiety, indeed, overcomes the whole family.

Commentary: *Dharma*—the duties and ceremonies practised by the family in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures.

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः ।।४१।।

अधर्माभिभवात् from the prevalence of impiety, कृष्ण O Krishna, प्रदुष्यन्ति become corrupt, कुलस्त्रियः the women of the family, स्त्रीषु in women, दुष्टासु (being) corrupt, वार्ष्णेय O Varshneya, जायते arises, वर्णसङ्करः caste-admixture.

41. By the prevalence of impiety, O Krishna, the women of the family become corrupt; and, women being corrupted, O Varshneya (descendant of Vrishni), there arises intermingling of castes.

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ।।४२।।

सङ्करः confusion of castes, नरकाय for the hell, एव also, कुलघ्नानाम् of the slayers of the family, कुलस्य of the family, च and, पतन्ति fall, पितरः the forefathers, हि verily, एषां their, लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः deprived of the offerings of rice-ball and water.

42. Confusion of castes leads to hell the slayers of the family, for their forefathers fall, deprived of the offerings of rice-ball and water (libations).

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकैः ।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ।।४३।।

दोषैः by evil deeds, एतैः (by) these, कुलघ्नानाम् of the family destroyers, वर्णसङ्करकारकैः causing intermingling of castes, उत्साद्यन्ते are destroyed, जातिधर्माः religious rites of the caste, कुलधर्माः family religious rites, च and, शाश्वताः eternal.

43. By these evil deeds of the destroyers of the family, which cause confusion of castes, the eternal religious rites of the caste and the family are destroyed.

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
नरकेऽनियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ।।४४।।

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणाम् whose family religious practices are destroyed, मनुष्याणाम् of the men, जनार्दन O Janardana, नरके in hell, अनियतं for unknown period, वासः dwelling, भवति is, इति thus, अनुशुश्रुम we have heard.

44. We have heard, O Janardana, that inevitable is the dwelling for an unknown period in hell for those men in whose families the religious practices have been destroyed.

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥४५॥

अहो बत alas, महत् great, पापम् sin, कर्तुम् to do, व्यवसिताः prepared, वयम् we, यत् that, राज्यसुखलोभेन by the greed of pleasure of kingdom, हन्तुम् to kill, स्वजनम् kinsmen, उद्यताः prepared.

45. Alas! We are involved in a great sin, in that we are prepared to kill our kinsmen, through greed for the pleasures of a kingdom.

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥४६॥

यदि if, माम् me, अप्रतीकारम् unresisting, अशस्त्रम् unarmed, शस्त्रपाणयः with weapons in hand, धार्तराष्ट्राः the sons of Dhritarashtra, रणे in the battle, हन्युः should slay, तत् that, मे of me, क्षेमतरम् better, भवेत् would be.

46. If the sons of Dhritarashtra with weapons in hand should slay me in battle, unresisting and unarmed, that would be better for me.

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वाऽर्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥४७॥

एवम् thus, उक्त्वा having said, अर्जुनः Arjuna, संख्ये in the battle, रथोपस्थे on the seat of the chariot, उपाविशत् sat down, विसृज्य having cast away, सशरम् with arrow, चापम् bow, शोकसंविग्नमानसः with a mind distressed with sorrow.

Sanjaya said:

47. Having thus spoken in the midst of the battlefield, Arjuna, casting away his bow and arrow, sat down on the seat of the chariot with his mind overwhelmed with sorrow.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
अर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the first discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Despondency of Arjuna.

अथ द्वितीयोऽध्यायः

SECOND DISCOURSE

सांख्ययोगः

SANKHYA YOGA

सञ्जय उवाच

तं तथा कृपयाऽविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥१॥

तम् to him, तथा thus, कृपया with pity, आविष्टम् overcome, अश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् with eyes filled with tears and agitated, विषीदन्तम् despondent, इदम् this, वाक्यम् speech, उवाच spoke, मधुसूदनः Madhusudana.

Sanjaya said:

1. To him who was thus overcome with pity and who was despondent, with eyes full of tears and agitated, Madhusudana (the destroyer of Madhu) or Krishna spoke these words:

श्री भगवानुवाच

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥२॥

कुतः whence, त्वा upon thee, कश्मलम् dejection, इदम् this, विषमे in perilous strait, समुपस्थितम् comes, अनार्यजुष्टम् unworthy (un-aryan-like), अस्वर्ग्यम् heaven-excluding, अकीर्तिकरम् disgraceful, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Whence is this perilous strait come upon thee, this dejection which is unworthy of you, disgraceful, and which will close the gates of heaven upon you, O Arjuna?

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥३॥

क्लैब्यम् impotence, मा स्म गमः do not get, पार्थ O Partha, न not, एतत् this, त्वयि in thee, उपपद्यते is fitting, क्षुद्रम् mean, हृदयदौर्बल्यम् weakness of the heart, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, उत्तिष्ठ stand up, परन्तप O scorcher of the foes.

3. Yield not to impotence, O Arjuna, son of Pritha. It does not befit thee. Cast off this mean weakness of the heart! Stand up, O scorcher of the foes!

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥४॥

कथम् how, भीष्मम् Bhishma, अहम् I, संख्ये in battle, द्रोणम् Drona, च and, मधुसूदन O Madhusudana, इषुभिः with arrows, प्रतियोत्स्यामि shall fight, पूजार्हौ worthy to be worshipped, अरिसूदन O destroyer of enemies.

Arjuna said:

4. How, O Madhusudana, shall I fight in battle with arrows against Bhishma and Drona, who are fit to be worshipped, O destroyer of enemies?

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥५॥

गुरून् the Gurus (teachers), अहत्वा instead of slaying, हि indeed, महानुभावान् most noble, श्रेयः better, भोक्तुम् to eat, भैक्ष्यम् alms, अपि even, इह here, लोके in the world, हत्वा having slain, अर्थकामान् desirous of wealth, तु indeed, गुरून् Gurus, इह here, एव also, भुञ्जीय enjoy, भोगान् enjoyments, रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् stained with blood.

5. Better it is, indeed, in this world to accept alms than to slay the most noble teachers. But if I kill them, even in this world

all my enjoyments of wealth and fulfilled desires will be stained with (their) blood.

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-
स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥६॥

न not, च and, एतत् this, विद्मः (we) know, कतरत् which, नः for us, गरीयः better, यत् that, वा or, जयेम we should conquer, यदि if, वा or, नः us, जयेयुः they should conquer, यान् whom, एव even, हत्वा having slain, न not, जिजीविषामः we wish to live, ते those, अवस्थिताः (are) standing, प्रमुखे in face, धार्तराष्ट्राः sons of Dhritarashtra.

6. We can hardly tell which will be better, that we should conquer them or that they should conquer us. Even the sons of Dhritarashtra, after slaying whom we do not wish to live, stand facing us.

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः with nature overpowered by the taint of pity, पृच्छामि I ask, त्वाम् Thee, धर्मसंमूढचेताः with a mind in confusion about duty, यत् which, श्रेयः good, स्यात् may be, निश्चितम् decisively, ब्रूहि say, तत् that, मे for me, शिष्यः disciple, ते Thy, अहम् I, शाधि teach, माम् me, त्वाम् to Thee, प्रपन्नम् taken refuge.

7. My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity; my mind is confused as to duty. I ask Thee: Tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee.

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्या-
द्यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।

अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धम्
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥८॥

न हि not, प्रपश्यामि I see, मम my, अपनुद्यात् would remove, यत् that, शोकम् grief, उच्छोषणम् drying up, इन्द्रियाणाम् of my senses, अवाप्य having obtained, भूमौ on the earth, असपत्नम् unrivalled, ऋद्धम् prosperous, राज्यम् dominion, सुराणाम् over the gods, अपि even, च and, आधिपत्यम् lordship.

8. I do not see that it would remove this sorrow that burns up my senses, even if I should attain prosperous and unrivalled dominion on earth or lordship over the gods.

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तप ।
न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥९॥

एवम् thus, उक्त्वा having spoken, हृषीकेशम् to Hrishikesha, गुडाकेशः Arjuna (the conqueror of sleep), परन्तप destroyer of foes, न योत्स्ये I will not fight, इति thus, गोविन्दम् to Govinda, उक्त्वा having said, तूष्णीम् silent, बभूव ह became.

Sanjaya said:

9. Having spoken thus to Hrishikesha (the Lord of the senses), Arjuna (the conqueror of sleep), the destroyer of foes, said to Krishna, "I will not fight" and became silent.

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥१०॥

तम् to him, उवाच spoke, हृषीकेशः Hrishikesha, प्रहसन् smiling, इव as it were, भारत O Bharata, सेनयोः of the armies, उभयोः (of) both, मध्ये in the middle, विषीदन्तम् despondent, इदम् this, वचः word.

10. To him who was despondent in the midst of the two armies, Krishna, as if smiling, O Bharata, spoke these words.

श्री भगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥११॥

अशोच्यान् those who should not be grieved for, अन्वशोचः hast grieved, त्वम् thou, प्रज्ञावादान् words of wisdom, च and, भाषसे speakest, गतासून् the dead, अगतासून् the living, च and, न अनुशोचन्ति grieve not, पण्डिताः the wise.

The Blessed Lord said:

11. Thou hast grieved for those that should not be grieved for, yet thou speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.

Commentary: The philosophy of the Gita begins from this verse.

Bhishma and Drona deserve no grief because they are eternal in their real nature and they are virtuous men who possess very good conduct. Though you speak words of wisdom, you are unwise because you grieve for those who are really eternal and who deserve no grief. They who are endowed with the knowledge of the Self are wise men. They will not grieve for the living or for the dead because they know well that the Self is immortal and that It is unborn. They also know that there is no such a thing as death, that it is a separation of the astral body from the physical, that death is nothing more than a disintegration of matter and that the five elements of which the body is composed return to their source. Arjuna had forgotten the eternal nature of the Soul and the changing nature of the body. Because of his ignorance, he began to act as if the temporary relations with kinsmen, teachers, etc., were permanent. He forgot that his relations with this world in his present life were the results of past actions. These, when exhausted, end all relationship and new ones crop up when one takes on another body.

The result of past actions is known as *karma* and that portion of the *karma* which gave rise to the present incarnation is known as *prarabdha karma*.

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥१२॥

न not, तु indeed, एव also, अहम् I, जातु at any time, न not, आसम् was, न not, त्वम् thou, न not, इमे these, जनाधिपाः rulers of men, न not, च and, एव also, न not, भविष्यामः shall be, सर्वे all, वयम् we, अतः from this time, परम् after.

12. Nor at any time indeed was I not, nor thou, nor these rulers of men, nor verily shall we ever cease to be hereafter.

Commentary: Lord Krishna speaks here of the immortality of the Soul or the imperishable nature of the Self (Atman). The Soul exists in the three periods of time (past, present and future). Man continues to exist even after the death of the physical body. There is life beyond.

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥१३॥

देहिनः of the embodied (soul), अस्मिन् in this, यथा as, देहे in body, कौमारम् childhood, यौवनम् youth, जरा old age, तथा so also, देहान्तरप्राप्तिः the attaining of another body, धीरः the firm, तत्र thereat, न not, मुह्यति grieves.

13. Just as in this body the embodied (soul) passes into childhood, youth and old age, so also does it pass into another body; the firm man does not grieve thereat.

Commentary: Just as there is no interruption in the passing of childhood into youth and youth into old age in this body, so also there is no interruption by death in the continuity of the ego. The Self is not dead at the termination of the stage, viz., childhood. It is certainly not born again at the beginning of the second stage, viz., youth. Just as the Self passes unchanged from childhood to youth and from youth to old age, so also the Self passes unchanged from one body into another. Therefore, the wise man is not at all distressed about it.

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

मात्रास्पर्शाः contacts of senses with objects, तु indeed, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya (son of Kunti), शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः producers of cold and heat, pleasure and pain, आगमापायिनः with beginning and end, अनित्याः impermanent, तान् them, तितिक्षस्व bear (thou), भारत O Bharata.

14. The contacts of the senses with the objects, O son of Kunti, which cause heat and cold, pleasure and pain, have a beginning and an end; they are impermanent; endure them bravely, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Cold is pleasant at one time and painful at another. Heat is pleasant in winter but painful in summer. The same object that gives pleasure at one time gives pain at another time. So the sense-contacts that give rise to the sensations of heat and cold, pleasure and pain come and go. Therefore, they are impermanent in nature. The objects come in contact with the senses or the Indriyas, viz., skin, ear, eye, nose, etc., and the sensations are carried by the nerves to the mind which has its seat in the brain. It is the mind that feels pleasure and pain. One should try to bear patiently heat and cold, pleasure and pain and develop a balanced state of mind. (*Cf.* V. 22)

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥१५॥

यम् whom, हि surely, न व्यथयन्ति afflict not, एते these, पुरुषम् man, पुरुषर्षभ chief among men, समदुःखसुखम् same in pleasure and pain, धीरम् firm man, सः he, अमृतत्वाय for immortality, कल्पते is fit.

15. That firm man whom, surely, these afflict not, O chief among men, to whom pleasure and pain are the same, is fit for attaining immortality.

Commentary: Dehadhyasa or identification of the Self with the body is the cause of pleasure and pain. The more you are able to identify yourself with the immortal, all-pervading Self, the less will you be affected by the pairs of opposites (Dvandvas, pleasure and pain, etc.)

Titiksha or the power of endurance develops the will-power. Calm endurance in pleasure and pain, and heat and cold is one of the qualifications of an aspirant on the path of Jnana Yoga. It is one of the Shatsampat or sixfold virtues. It is a condition of right knowledge. Titiksha by itself cannot give you

Moksha or liberation, but still, when coupled with discrimination and dispassion, it becomes a means to the attainment of Immortality or knowledge of the Self. (*Cf.* XVIII. 53)

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥१६॥

न not, असतः of the unreal, विद्यते is, भावः being, न not, अभावः non-being, विद्यते is, सतः of the real, उभयोः of the two, अपि also, दृष्टः (has been) seen, अन्तः the final truth, तु indeed, अनयोः of these, तत्त्वदर्शिभिः by the knowers of the Truth.

16. The unreal hath no being; there is no non-being of the real; the truth about both has been seen by the knowers of the Truth (or the seers of the Essence).

Commentary: The changeless, homogeneous Atman or the Self always exists. It is the only solid Reality. This phenomenal world of names and forms is ever changing. Hence it is unreal. The sage or the Jivanmukta is fully aware that the Self always exists and that this world is like a mirage. Through his Jnanachakshus or the eye of intuition, he directly cognises the Self. This world vanishes for him like the snake in the rope, after it has been seen that only the rope exists. He rejects the names and forms and takes the underlying Essence in all the names and forms, viz., Asti-Bhati-Priya or Satchidananda or Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. Hence he is a *Tattvadarshi* or a knower of the Truth or the Essence.

What is changing must be unreal. What is constant or permanent must be real.

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित् कर्तुमर्हति ॥१७॥

अविनाशि indestructible, तु indeed, तत् That, विद्धि know (thou), येन by which, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, ततम् is pervaded, विनाशम् destruction, अव्ययस्य अस्य of this Imperishable, न not, कश्चित् anyone, कर्तुम् to do, अर्हति is able.

17. Know That to be indestructible, by Which all this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of That, the Imperishable.

Commentary: Brahman or Atman pervades all the objects like ether. Even if the pot is broken, the ether that is within and without the pot cannot be destroyed. Even so, if the bodies and all other objects perish, Brahman or the Self that pervades them cannot perish. It is the living Truth, Sat.

Brahman has no parts. There cannot be either increase or diminution in Brahman. People are ruined by loss of wealth. But Brahman does not suffer any loss in that way. It is inexhaustible. Therefore, none can bring about the disappearance or destruction of the Self. It always exists. It is always all-full and self-contained. It is Existence Absolute. It is immutable.

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥१८॥

अन्तवन्तः having an end, इमे these, देहाः bodies, नित्यस्य of the everlasting, उक्ताः are said, शरीरिणः of the embodied, अनाशिनः of the indestructible, अप्रमेयस्य of the immeasurable, तस्मात् therefore, युध्यस्व fight, भारत O Bharata.

18. These bodies of the embodied Self, Which is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable, are said to have an end. Therefore fight, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna the nature of the all-pervading, immortal Self in a variety of ways and thus induces him to fight by removing his delusion, grief and despondency which are born of ignorance.

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

यः he who, एनम् this (Self), वेत्ति knows, हन्तारम् slayer, यः he who, च and, एनम् this, मन्यते thinks, हतम् slain, उभौ both, तौ those, न not, विजानीतः know, न not, अयम् this, हन्ति slays, न not, हन्यते is slain.

19. He who takes the Self to be the slayer and he who thinks It is slain, neither of them *knows*. It slays not, nor is It slain.

Commentary: The Self is non-doer (Akarta) and as It is immutable, It is neither the agent nor the object of the act of slaying. He who thinks "I slay" or "I am slain" with the body or the Ahamkara (ego), he does not really comprehend the true nature of the Self. The Self is indestructible. It exists in the three periods of time. It is Sat (Existence). When the body is destroyed, the Self is not destroyed. The body has to undergo change in any case. It is inevitable. But the Self is not at all affected by it. Verses 19, 20, 21, 23 and 24 speak of the immortality of the Self or Atman. (*Cf.* XVIII. 17)

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-
न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥२०॥

न not, जायते is born, म्रियते dies, वा or, कदाचित् at any time, न not, अयम् this (Self), भूत्वा having been, भविता will be, वा or, न not, भूयः (any) more, अजः unborn, नित्यः eternal, शाश्वतः changeless, अयम् this, पुराणः ancient, न not, हन्यते is killed, हन्यमाने being killed, शरीरे in body.

20. It is not born, nor does It ever die; after having been, It again ceases not to be; unborn, eternal, changeless and ancient, It is not killed when the body is killed.

Commentary: This Self (Atman) is destitute of the six types of transformation or Bhava-Vikaras such as birth, existence, growth, transformation, decline and death. As It is indivisible (Akhanda), It does not diminish in size. It neither grows nor does It decline. It is ever the same. Birth and death are for the physical body only. Birth and death cannot touch the immortal, all-pervading Self.

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥२१॥

वेद knows, अविनाशिनम् indestructible, नित्यम् eternal, यः who, एनम् this (Self), अजम् unborn, अव्ययम् inexhaustible, कथम् how, सः he (that), पुरुषः man, पार्थ O Partha (son of Pritha), कम् whom, घातयति causes to be slain, हन्ति kills, कम् whom.

21. Whosoever knows It to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and inexhaustible, how can that man slay, O Arjuna, or cause to be slain?

Commentary: The enlightened sage who knows the immutable and indestructible Self through direct cognition or spiritual Anubhava (experience) cannot do the act of slaying. He cannot cause another to slay also.

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२२॥

वासांसि clothes, जीर्णानि worn out, यथा as, विहाय having cast away, नवानि new, गृह्णाति takes, नरः man, अपराणि others, तथा so, शरीराणि bodies, विहाय having cast away, जीर्णानि worn-out, अन्यानि others, संयाति enters, नवानि new, देही the embodied (one).

22. Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied Self casts off worn-out bodies and enters others which are new.

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥२३॥

न not, एनम् this (Self), छिन्दन्ति cut, शस्त्राणि weapons, न not, एनम् this, दहति burns, पावकः fire, न not, च and, एनम् this, क्लेदयन्ति wet, आपः waters, न not, शोषयति dries, मारुतः wind.

23. Weapons cut It not, fire burns It not, water wets It not, wind dries It not.

Commentary: The Self is indivisible. It has no parts. It is extremely subtle. It is infinite. Therefore, sword cannot cut It; fire cannot burn It; water cannot wet It; wind cannot dry It.

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥२४॥

अच्छेद्यः cannot be cut, अयम् this (Self), अदाह्यः cannot be burnt, अयम् this, अक्लेद्यः cannot be wetted, अशोष्यः cannot be dried, एव also, च and, नित्यः eternal, सर्वगतः all-pervading, स्थाणुः stable, अचलः immovable, अयम् this, सनातनः ancient.

24. This Self cannot be cut, burnt, wetted, nor dried up. It is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable and ancient.

Commentary: The Self is very subtle. It is beyond the reach of speech and mind. It is very difficult to understand this subtle Self. So Lord Krishna explains the nature of the immortal Self in a variety of ways with various illustrations and examples, so that It can be grasped by the people.

Sword cannot cut this Self. So It is eternal. Because It is eternal, It is all-pervading. Because It is all-pervading, It is stable like a statue. Because It is stable, It is immovable. It is everlasting. Therefore, It is not produced out of any cause. It is not new. It is ancient.

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥२५॥

अव्यक्तः unmanifested, अयम् this (Self), अचिन्त्यः unthinkable, अयम् this, अविकार्यः unchangeable, अयम् this, उच्यते is said, तस्मात् therefore, एवम् thus, विदित्वा having known, एनम् this, न not, अनुशोचितुम् to grieve, अर्हसि (thou) oughtest.

25. This (Self) is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable and unchangeable. Therefore, knowing This to be such, thou shouldst not grieve.

Commentary: The Self is not an object of perception. It can hardly be seen by the physical eyes. Therefore, the Self is unmanifested. That which is seen by the eyes becomes an object of thought. As the Self cannot be perceived by the eyes, It is unthinkable. Milk when mixed with buttermilk changes its form. The Self cannot change Its form like milk. Hence, It is changeless and immutable. Therefore, thus understanding the

Self, thou shouldst not mourn. Thou shouldst not think also that thou art their slayer and that they are killed by thee.

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैवं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२६॥

अथ now, च and, एनम् this (Self), नित्यजातम् constantly born, नित्यम् constantly, वा or, मन्यसे thinkest, मृतम् dead, तथापि even then, त्वम् thou, महाबाहो mighty-armed, न not, एवम् thus, शोचितुम् to grieve, अर्हसि (thou) oughtest.

26. But even if thou thinkest of It as being constantly born and constantly dying, even then, O mighty-armed, thou shouldst not grieve.

Commentary: Lord Krishna here, for the sake of argument, takes up the popular supposition. Granting that the Self is again and again born whenever a body comes into being, and again and again dies whenever the body dies, O mighty-armed (O Arjuna of great valour and strength), thou shouldst not grieve thus, because birth is inevitable to what is dead and death is inevitable to what is born. This is the inexorable or unrelenting Law of Nature.

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२७॥

जातस्य of the born, हि for, ध्रुवः certain, मृत्युः death, ध्रुवम् certain, जन्म birth, मृतस्य of the dead, च and, तस्मात् therefore, अपरिहार्ये inevitable, अर्थे in matter, न not, त्वम् thou, शोचितुम् to grieve, अर्हसि (thou) oughtest.

27. For certain is death for the born, and certain is birth for the dead; therefore, over the inevitable thou shouldst not grieve.

Commentary: Birth is sure to happen to that which is dead; death is sure to happen to that which is born. Birth and death are certainly unavoidable. Therefore, you should not grieve over an inevitable matter.

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥२८॥

अव्यक्तादीनि unmanifested in the beginning, भूतानि beings, व्यक्तमध्यानि manifested in their middle state, भारत O Bharata, अव्यक्तनिधनानि unmanifested again in the end, एव also, तत्र there, का what, परिदेवना grief.

28. Beings are unmanifested in their beginning, manifested in their middle state, O Arjuna, and unmanifested again in their end. What is there to grieve about?

Commentary: The physical body is a combination of the five elements. It is seen by the physical eyes only after the five elements have entered into such combination. After death, the body disintegrates and the five elements go back to their source; it cannot be seen. Therefore, the body can be seen only in the middle state. The relationship as son, friend, teacher, father, mother, wife, brother and sister is formed through the body on account of attachment and Moha (delusion). Just as planks unite and separate in a river, just as pilgrims unite and separate in a public inn, so also fathers, mothers, sons and brothers unite and separate in this world. This world is a very big public inn. People unite and separate.

There is no pot in the beginning and in the end. Even if you see the pot in the middle, you should think and feel that it is illusory and does not really exist. So also there is no body in the beginning and in the end. That which does not exist in the beginning and in the end must be illusory in the middle also. You must think and feel that the body does not really exist in the middle as well.

He who thus understands the nature of the body and all human relationships based on it, will not grieve.

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-
माश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति
श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥२९॥

आश्चर्यवत् as a wonder, पश्यति sees, कश्चित् some one, एनम् this (Self), आश्चर्यवत् as a wonder, वदति speaks of, तथा so, एव also, च and,

अन्यः another, आश्चर्यवत् as a wonder, च and, एनम् this, अन्यः another, शृणोति hears, श्रुत्वा having heard, अपि even, एनम् this, वेद knows, न not, च and, एव also, कश्चित् any one.

29. One sees This (the Self) as a wonder; another speaks of It as a wonder; another hears of It as a wonder; yet having heard, none understands It at all.

Commentary: The verse may also be interpreted in this manner. He that sees, hears and speaks of the Self is a wonderful man. Such a man is very rare. He is one among many thousands. Thus the Self is very hard to understand.

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

देही indweller, नित्यम् always, अवध्यः indestructible, अयम् this, देहे in the body, सर्वस्य of all, भारत O Bharata, तस्मात् therefore, सर्वाणि (for) all, भूतानि creatures, न not, त्वम् thou, शोचितुम् to grieve, अर्हसि (thou) shouldst.

30. This, the Indweller in the body of everyone, is ever indestructible, O Arjuna; therefore, thou shouldst not grieve for any creature.

Commentary: The body of any creature may be destroyed but the Self cannot be killed. Therefore you should not grieve regarding any creature whatever, Bhishma or anybody else.

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥३१॥

स्वधर्मम् own duty, अपि also, च and, अवेक्ष्य looking at, न not, विकम्पितुम् to waver, अर्हसि (thou) oughtest, धर्म्यात् than righteous, हि indeed, युद्धात् than war, श्रेयः higher, अन्यत् other, क्षत्रियस्य of a Kshatriya, न not, विद्यते is.

31. Further, having regard to thy duty, thou shouldst not waver, for there is nothing higher for a Kshatriya than a righteous war.

Commentary: Lord Krishna now gives to Arjuna worldly reasons for fighting. Up to this time, He talked to Arjuna on the immortality of the Self and gave him philosophical reasons. Now He says to Arjuna, "O Arjuna! Fighting is a Kshatriya's own duty. You ought not to swerve from that duty. To a Kshatriya (one born in the warrior or ruling class) nothing is more welcome than a righteous war. A warrior should fight."

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ।।३२।।

यदृच्छया of itself, च and, उपपन्नम् come, स्वर्गद्वारम् the gate of heaven, अपावृतम् opened, सुखिनः happy, क्षत्रियाः Kshatriyas, पार्थ O Partha, लभन्ते obtain, युद्धम् battle, ईदृशम् such.

32. Happy are the Kshatriyas, O Arjuna! who are called upon to fight in such a battle that comes of itself as an open door to heaven.

Commentary: The scriptures declare that if a Kshatriya dies for a righteous cause on the battlefield, he at once goes to heaven.

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ।।३३।।

अथ चेत् but if, त्वम् thou, इमम् this, धर्म्यम् righteous, संग्रामम् warfare, न not, करिष्यसि will do, ततः then, स्वधर्मम् own duty, कीर्तिम् fame, च and, हित्वा having abandoned, पापम् sin, अवाप्स्यसि shall incur.

33. But if thou wilt not fight this righteous war, then having abandoned thine own duty and fame, thou shalt incur sin.

Commentary: The Lord reminds Arjuna of the fame he had already earned and which he would now lose if he refused to fight. Arjuna had acquired great fame by fighting with Lord Siva. Arjuna proceeded on a pilgrimage to the Himalayas. He fought with Siva Who appeared in the guise of a mountaineer (Kirata) and got from Him the Pasupatastra, a celestial weapon.

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ।।३४।।

अकीर्तिम् dishonour, च and, अपि also, भूतानि beings, कथयिष्यन्ति will tell, ते thy, अव्ययाम् everlasting, संभावितस्य of the honoured, च and, अकीर्तिः dishonour, मरणात् than death, अतिरिच्यते exceeds.

34. People, too, will recount thy everlasting dishonour; and to one who has been honoured, dishonour is worse than death.

Commentary: The world also will ever recount thy infamy which will survive thee for a long time. Death is really preferable to disgrace to one who has been honoured as a great hero and mighty warrior with noble qualities.

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

भयात् from fear, रणात् from the battle, उपरतम् withdrawn, मंस्यन्ते will think, त्वाम् thee, महारथाः the great car-warriors, येषाम् of whom, च and, त्वम् thou, बहुमतः much thought of, भूत्वा having been, यास्यसि will receive, लाघवम् lightness.

35. The great car-warriors will think that thou hast withdrawn from the battle through fear; and thou wilt be lightly held by them who have thought much of thee.

Commentary: Duryodhana and others will certainly think that you have fled from the battle from fear of Karna and others, but not through compassion and reverence for elders and teachers. Duryodhana and others who have shown great esteem to you on account of your chivalry, bravery and other noble qualities, will think very lightly of you and treat you with contempt.

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून् वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥३६॥

अवाच्यवादान् words that are improper to be spoken, च and, बहून् many, वदिष्यन्ति will say, तव thy, अहिताः enemies, निन्दन्तः cavilling, तव thy, सामर्थ्यम् power, ततः than this, दुःखतरम् more painful, नु indeed, किम् what.

36. Thy enemies also, cavilling at thy power, will speak many abusive words. What is more painful than this?

Commentary: There is really no pain more unbearable and tormenting than that of slander thus incurred.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥३७॥

हतः slain, वा or, प्राप्स्यसि (thou) wilt obtain, स्वर्गम् heaven, जित्वा having conquered, वा or, भोक्ष्यसे (thou) wilt enjoy, महीम् the earth, तस्मात् therefore, उत्तिष्ठ stand up, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti, युद्धाय for fight, कृतनिश्चयः resolved.

37. Slain, thou wilt obtain heaven; victorious, thou wilt enjoy the earth; therefore, stand up, O son of Kunti, resolved to fight.

Commentary: In either case you will be benefited. Therefore, stand up with the firm resolution: "I will conquer the enemy or die."

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३८॥

सुखदुःखे pleasure and pain, समे same, कृत्वा having made, लाभालाभौ gain and loss, जयाजयौ victory and defeat, ततः then, युद्धाय for battle, युज्यस्व engage thou, न not, एवम् thus, पापम् sin, अवाप्स्यसि shalt incur.

38. Having made pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the same, engage thou in battle for the sake of battle; thus thou shalt not incur sin.

Commentary: This is the Yoga of equanimity or the doctrine of poise in action. If anyone does any action with the above mental attitude or balanced state of mind he will not reap the fruits of his action. Such an action will lead to the purification of his heart and freedom from birth and death. One has to develop such a balanced state of mind through continuous struggle and vigilant efforts.

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्यायुक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥३९॥

एषा this, ते to thee, अभिहिता (is) declared, सांख्ये in Sankhya, बुद्धिः wisdom, योगे in the Yoga, तु indeed, इमाम् this, शृणु hear, बुद्ध्या with wisdom, युक्तः endowed with, यया which, पार्थ O Partha, कर्मबन्धम् bondage of Karma, प्रहास्यसि (thou) shalt cast off.

39. This, which has been taught to thee, is wisdom concerning Sankhya. Now listen to wisdom concerning Yoga, endowed with which, O Arjuna, thou shalt cast off the bonds of action.

Commentary: Lord Krishna taught Jnana (knowledge) to Arjuna till now. (Sankhya Yoga is the path of Vedanta or Jnana Yoga, which treats of the nature of the Atman or the Self and the methods to attain Self-realisation. It is not the Sankhya philosophy of sage Kapila.) He is now going to teach Arjuna the technique or secret of Karma Yoga endowed with which he (or anybody else) can break through the bonds of Karma. The Karma Yogi should perform work without expectation of fruits of his actions, without the idea of agency (or the notion "I do this"), without attachment, after annihilating or going beyond all the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, gain and loss, victory and defeat, etc. Dharma and Adharma, or merit and demerit will not touch that Karma Yogi who works without attachment and egoism. The Karma Yogi consecrates all his works and their fruits as offerings unto the Lord (*Isvararpanam*) and thus obtains the grace of the Lord (*Isvaraprasada*).

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ।।४०।।

न not, इह in this, अभिक्रमनाशः loss of effort, अस्ति is, प्रत्यवायः production of contrary results, न not, विद्यते is, स्वल्पम् very little, अपि even, अस्य of this, धर्मस्य duty, त्रायते protects, महतः (from) great, भयात् fear.

40. In this there is no loss of effort, nor is there any harm (production of contrary results or transgression). Even a little of this knowledge (even a little practice of this Yoga) protects one from great fear.

Commentary: If a religious ceremony is left uncompleted, it is a wastage as the performer cannot realise the fruits. But it is not so in the case of Karma Yoga because every action causes immediate purification of the heart.

In agriculture there is uncertainty. The farmer may till the land, plough and sow the seed; but he may not get a crop if there is no rain. This is not so in Karma Yoga. There is no uncertainty at all. Further, there is no chance of any harm coming out of it. In the case of medical treatment great harm will result from the doctor's injudicious treatment if he uses a wrong medicine. But it is not so in the case of Karma Yoga. Anything done, however little it may be, in this path of Yoga, the Yoga of action, saves one from great fear of being caught in the wheel of birth and death. Lord Krishna here extols Karma Yoga in order to create interest in Arjuna in this Yoga.

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥४१॥

व्यवसायात्मिका one-pointed, बुद्धिः determination, एका single, इह here, कुरुनन्दन O joy of the Kurus, बहुशाखाः many-branched, हि indeed, अनन्ताः endless, च and, बुद्धयः thoughts, अव्यवसायिनाम् of the irresolute.

41. Here, O joy of the Kurus, there is but a single one-pointed determination; many-branched and endless are the thoughts of the irresolute.

Commentary: Here, in this path to Bliss there is only one thought of a resolute nature; there is single-minded determination. This single thought arises from the right source of knowledge. The student of Yoga collects all the dissipated rays of the mind. He gathers all of them through discrimination, dispassion and concentration. He is free from wavering or vacillation of the mind.

The worldly-minded man who is sunk in the mire of Samsara has no single-minded determination. He entertains countless thoughts. His mind is always unsteady and vacillating.

If thoughts cease, Samsara also ceases. Mind generates endless thoughts and this world comes into being. Thoughts, and names and forms are inseparable. If the thoughts are controlled, the mind is controlled and the Yogi is liberated.

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥४२॥

याम् which, इमाम् this, पुष्पिताम् flowery, वाचम् speech, प्रवदन्ति utter, अविपश्चितः the unwise, वेदवादरताः taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas, पार्थ O Partha, न not, अन्यत् other, अस्ति is, इति thus, वादिनः saying.

42. Flowery speech is uttered by the unwise, taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas, O Arjuna, saying, "There is nothing else."

Commentary: Unwise people who are lacking in discrimination lay great stress upon the Karma Kanda or the ritualistic portion of the Vedas, which lays down specific rules for specific actions for the attainment of specific fruits and extol these actions and rewards unduly. They are highly enamoured of such Vedic passages which prescribe ways for the attainment of heavenly enjoyments. They say that there is nothing else beyond the sensual enjoyments in Svarga (heaven) which can be obtained by performing the rites of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas.

There are two main divisions of the Vedas—Karma Kanda (the section dealing with action) and Jnana Kanda (the section dealing with knowledge). The Karma Kanda comprises the Brahmanas and the Samhitas. This is the authority for the Purvamimamsa school founded by Jaimini. The followers of this school deal with rituals and prescribe many of them for attaining enjoyments and power here and happiness in heaven. They regard this as the ultimate object of human existence. Ordinary people are attracted by their panegyrics. The Jnana Kanda comprises the Aranyakas and the Upanishads which deal with the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Self.

Life in heaven is also transitory. After the fruits of the good actions are exhausted, one has to come back to this earth-plane. Liberation or Moksha can only be attained by knowledge of the Self but not by performing a thousand and one sacrifices.

Lord Krishna assigns a comparatively inferior position to the doctrine of the Mimamsakas of performing Vedic sacrifices for obtaining heaven, power and lordship in this world as they cannot give us final liberation.

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥४३॥

कामात्मानः full of desires, स्वर्गपराः with heaven as their highest goal, जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् leading to (new) births as the result of their works, क्रियाविशेषबहुलाम् exuberant with various specific actions, भोगैश्वर्यगतिम् प्रति for the attainment of pleasure and lordship.

43. Full of desires, having heaven as their goal, (they utter speech which is directed to ends) leading to new births as the result of their works, and prescribe various methods abounding in specific actions, for the attainment of pleasure and power.

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥४४॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानाम् of the people deeply attached to pleasure and lordship, तया by that, अपहृतचेतसाम् whose minds are drawn away, व्यवसायात्मिका determinate, बुद्धिः reason, समाधौ in Samadhi, न not, विधीयते is fixed.

44. For those who are attached to pleasure and power, whose minds are drawn away by such teaching, *that* determinate reason is not formed which is steadily bent on meditation and Samadhi (superconscious state).

Commentary: Those who cling to pleasure and power cannot have steadiness of mind. They cannot concentrate or meditate. They are ever busy in planning projects for the acquisition of wealth and power. Their minds are ever restless. They have no poised understanding.

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥४५॥

त्रैगुण्यविषयाः deal with the three attributes, वेदाः the Vedas, निस्त्रैगुण्यः without these three attributes, भव be, अर्जुन O Arjuna,

निर्द्वन्द्वः free from the pairs of opposites, नित्यसत्त्वस्थः ever remaining in the Sattva (goodness), निर्योगक्षेमः free from (the thought of) acquisition and preservation, आत्मवान् established in the Self.

45. The Vedas deal with the three attributes (of Nature); be thou above these three attributes. O Arjuna, free yourself from the pairs of opposites, and ever remain in the quality of Sattva (goodness), freed from (the thought of) acquisition and preservation, and be established in the Self.

Commentary: *Guna* means attribute or quality. It is substance as well as quality. Nature (Prakriti) is made up of three Gunas, viz., Sattva (purity, light or harmony), Rajas (passion or motion) and Tamas (darkness or inertia). The pairs of opposites are heat and cold, pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, honour and dishonour, praise and censure. He who is anxious about new acquisitions or about the preservation of his old possessions cannot have peace of mind. He is ever restless. He cannot concentrate or meditate on the Self. He cannot practise virtue. Therefore, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna that he should be free from the thought of acquisition and preservation of things. (*Cf.* IX. 20, 21)

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ।।४६।।

यावान् as much, अर्थः use, उदपाने in a reservoir, सर्वतः everywhere, संप्लुतोदके being flooded, तावान् so much (use), सर्वेषु in all, वेदेषु in the Vedas, ब्राह्मणस्य of the Brahmana, विजानतः of the knowing.

46. To the Brahmana who has known the Self, all the Vedas are of as much use as is a reservoir of water in a place where there is a flood.

Commentary: Only for a sage who has realised the Self, the Vedas are of no use, because he is in possession of the infinite knowledge of the Self. This does not mean that the Vedas are useless. They are useful for the neophytes or the aspirants who have just started on the spiritual path.

All the transient pleasures derivable from the proper performance of all actions enjoined in the Vedas are comprehended in the infinite bliss of Self-knowledge.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

कर्मणि in work, एव only, अधिकारः right, ते thy, मा not, फलेषु in the fruits, कदाचन at any time, मा not, कर्मफलहेतुः भूः let not the fruits of action be thy motive, मा not, ते thy, सङ्गः attachment, अस्तु let (there) be, अकर्मणि in inaction.

47. Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction.

Commentary: When you perform actions have no desire for the fruits thereof under any circumstances. If you thirst for the fruits of your actions, you will have to take birth again and again to enjoy them. Action done with expectation of fruits (rewards) brings bondage. If you do not thirst for them, you get purification of heart and you will get knowledge of the Self through purity of heart and through the knowledge of the Self you will be freed from the round of births and deaths.

Neither let thy attachment be towards inaction thinking "what is the use of doing actions when I cannot get any reward for them?"

In a broad sense Karma means action. It also means duty which one has to perform according to his caste or station of life. According to the followers of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas (the Mimamsakas) Karma means the rituals and sacrifices prescribed in the Vedas. It has a deep meaning also. It signifies the destiny or the storehouse of tendencies of a man which give rise to his future birth.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

योगस्थः steadfast in Yoga, कुरु perform, कर्माणि actions, सङ्गम् attachment, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya,

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः in success and failure, समः the same, भूत्वा having become, समत्वम् evenness of mind, योगः Yoga, उच्यते is called.

48. Perform action, O Arjuna, being steadfast in Yoga, abandoning attachment and balanced in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called Yoga.

Commentary: Dwelling in union with the Divine perform actions merely for God's sake with a balanced mind in success and failure. Equilibrium is Yoga. The attainment of the knowledge of the Self through purity of heart obtained by doing actions without expectation of fruits is success (Siddhi). Failure is the non-attainment of knowledge by doing actions with expectation of fruit. (*Cf.* III. 9; IV. 14; IV. 20)

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

दूरेण by far, हि indeed, अवरम् inferior, कर्म action or work, बुद्धियोगात् than the Yoga of wisdom, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya, बुद्धौ in wisdom, शरणम् refuge, अन्विच्छ seek, कृपणाः wretched, फलहेतवः seekers after fruits.

49. Far lower than the Yoga of wisdom is action, O Arjuna. Seek thou refuge in wisdom; wretched are they whose motive is the fruit.

Commentary: Action done with evenness of mind is Yoga of wisdom. The Yogi who is established in the Yoga of wisdom is not affected by success or failure. He does not seek fruits of his actions. He has poised reason. His reason is rooted in the Self. Action performed by one who expects fruits for his actions, is far inferior to the Yoga of wisdom wherein the seeker does not seek fruits; because the former leads to bondage and is the cause of birth and death. (*Cf.* VIII. 18)

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥५०॥

बुद्धियुक्तः endowed with wisdom, जहाति casts off, इह in this life, उभे both, सुकृतदुष्कृते good and evil deeds, तस्मात् therefore, योगाय

to Yoga, युज्यस्व devote thyself, योगः Yoga, कर्मसु in actions, कौशलम् skill.

50. Endowed with wisdom (evenness of mind), one casts off in this life both good and evil deeds; therefore, devote thyself to Yoga; Yoga is skill in action.

Commentary: Work performed with motive towards fruits only can bind a man. It will bring the fruits and the performer of the action will have to take birth again in this mortal world to enjoy them. If work is performed with evenness of mind (the Yoga of wisdom, i.e., united to pure Buddhi, intelligence or reason) with the mind resting in the Lord, it will not bind him; it will not bring any fruit; it is no work at all. Actions which are of a binding nature lose that nature when performed with equanimity of mind, or poised reason. The Yogi of poised reason attributes all actions to the Divine Actor within (Isvara or God).

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥५१॥

कर्मजम् action-born, बुद्धियुक्ताः possessed of knowledge, हि indeed, फलम् the fruit, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, मनीषिणः the wise, जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः freed from the fetters of birth, पदम् the abode, गच्छन्ति go, अनामयम् beyond evil.

51. The wise, possessed of knowledge, having abandoned the fruits of their actions, and being freed from the fetters of birth, go to the place which is beyond all evil.

Commentary: Clinging to the fruits of actions is the cause of rebirth. Man takes a body to enjoy them. If anyone performs actions for the sake of God in fulfilment of His purpose without desire for the fruits, he is released from the bonds of birth and attains to the blissful state or the immortal abode.

Sages who possess evenness of mind abandon the fruits of their actions and thus escape from good and bad actions.

Buddhi referred to in the three verses 49, 50 and 51 may be the wisdom of the Sankhyas, i.e., the knowledge of the Self or Atma-Jnana which dawns when the mind is purified by Karma Yoga.

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ।।५२।।

यदा when, ते thy, मोहकलिलम् mire of delusion, बुद्धिः intellect, व्यतितरिष्यति crosses beyond, तदा then, गन्तासि thou shalt attain, निर्वेदम् to indifference, श्रोतव्यस्य of what has to be heard, श्रुतस्य what has been heard, च and.

52. When thy intellect crosses beyond the mire of delusion, then thou shalt attain to indifference as to what has been heard and what has yet to be heard.

Commentary: The mire of delusion is the identification of the Self with the not-Self. The sense of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self is confounded by the mire of delusion and the mind runs towards the sensual objects and the body is taken as the pure Self. When you attain purity of mind, you will attain to indifference regarding things heard and yet to be heard. They will appear to you to be of no use. You will not care a bit for them. You will entertain disgust for them. (*Cf.* XVI. 24)

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ।।५३।।

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना perplexed by what thou hast heard, ते thy, यदा when, स्थास्यति shall stand, निश्चला immovable, समाधौ in the Self, अचला steady, बुद्धिः intellect, तदा then, योगम् Self-realisation, अवाप्स्यसि (thou) shalt attain.

53. When thy intellect, which is perplexed by the Veda text, which thou hast read, shall stand immovable and steady in the Self, then thou shalt attain Self-realisation.

Commentary: When your intellect which is tossed about by the conflict of opinions regarding the Pravritti Marga (the path of action) and the Nivritti Marga (the path of retirement or renunciation) has become immovable without distraction and doubt and firmly established in the Self, then thou shalt attain Self-realisation or knowledge of the Self (Atma-Jnana).

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ॥५४॥

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य of the (sage of) steady wisdom, का what, भाषा description, समाधिस्थस्य of the (man) merged in the superconscious state, केशव O Kesava, स्थितधीः the sage of steady wisdom, किम् what (how), प्रभाषेत speaks, किम् what (how), आसीत sits, व्रजेत walks, किम् what (how).

Arjuna said:

54. What, O Krishna, is the description of him who has steady wisdom, and is merged in the superconscious state? How does one of steady wisdom speak, how does he sit, how does he walk?

Commentary: Arjuna wants to know from Lord Krishna the characteristic marks of one who is established in the Self in Samadhi; how he speaks, how he sits, how he moves about.

The characteristic marks of the sage of steady wisdom and the means of attaining that steady knowledge of the Self are described in the verses from 55 to 72 of this chapter.

Steady wisdom is settled knowledge of one's identity with Brahman attained by direct realisation. (*Cf.* XIV. 21, 27)

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥५५॥

प्रजहाति casts off, यदा when, कामान् desires, सर्वान् all, पार्थ O Partha, मनोगतान् of the mind, आत्मनि in the Self, एव only, आत्मना by the Self, तुष्टः satisfied, स्थितप्रज्ञः of steady wisdom, तदा then, उच्यते (he) is called.

The Blessed Lord said:

55. When a man completely casts off, O Arjuna, all the desires of the mind and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, then is he said to be one of steady wisdom.

Commentary: In this verse Lord Krishna gives His answer to the first part of Arjuna's question.

If anyone gets sugarcandy will he crave for black-sugar? Certainly not. If anyone can attain the supreme bliss of the Self, will he thirst for the sensual pleasures? No, not at all. The sum-total of all the pleasures of the world will seem worthless for the sage of steady wisdom who is satisfied in the Self. (*Cf.* III. 17; VI. 7, 8)

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥५६॥

दुःखेषु in adversity, अनुद्विग्नमनाः of unshaken mind, सुखेषु in pleasure, विगतस्पृहः without hankering, वीतरागभयक्रोधः free from attachment, fear and anger, स्थितधीः of steady wisdom, मुनिः sage, उच्यते (he) is called.

56. He whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after pleasures, and is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.

Commentary: Lord Krishna gives His answer to the second part of Arjuna's question as to the conduct of a sage of steady wisdom in the 56th, 57th and 58th verses.

The mind of a sage of steady wisdom is not distressed in calamities. He is not affected by the three afflictions (Taapas) —Adhyatmika (arising from diseases or disorders in one's own body), Adhidaivika (arising from thunder, lightning, storm, flood, etc.), and Adhibhautika (arising from scorpions, cobras, tigers, etc.). When he is placed in an affluent condition he does not long for sensual pleasures. (*Cf.* IV. 10)

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५७॥

यः he who, सर्वत्र everywhere, अनभिस्नेहः without attachment, तत् that, तत् that, प्राप्य having obtained, शुभाशुभम् good and evil, न not, अभिनन्दति rejoices, न not, द्वेष्टि hates, तस्य of him, प्रज्ञा wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता is fixed.

57. He who is everywhere without attachment, on meeting with anything good or bad, who neither rejoices nor hates, his wisdom is fixed.

Commentary: The sage possesses poised understanding or evenness of mind. He does not rejoice in pleasure nor is he averse to pain that may befall him. He is quite indifferent as he is rooted in the Self. He has no attachment even for his life or body as he identifies himself with Brahman or the Supreme Self. He will not praise anybody when the latter does any good to him nor censure anyone when one does him any harm. This is the answer given by the Lord to Arjuna's query: "How does a sage of steady wisdom talk?"

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५८॥

यदा when, संहरते withdraws, च and, अयम् this (Yogi), कूर्मः tortoise, अङ्गानि limbs, इव like, सर्वशः everywhere, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः from the sense-objects, तस्य of him, प्रज्ञा wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता is steadied.

58. When, like the tortoise which withdraws on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, then his wisdom becomes steady.

Commentary: Withdrawal of the senses is Pratyahara or abstraction. The mind has a natural tendency to run towards external objects. The Yogi again and again withdraws the mind from the objects of the senses and fixes it on the Self. A Yogi who is endowed with the power of Pratyahara can enter into Samadhi even in a crowded place by withdrawing his senses within the twinkling of an eye. He is not disturbed by tumultuous sounds and noises of any description. Even on the battlefield he can rest in his centre, the Self, by withdrawing his senses. He who practises Pratyahara is dead to the world. He will not be affected by the outside vibrations. At any time by mere willing he can bring his senses under his perfect control. They are his obedient servants or instruments.

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥५९॥

विषयाः the objects of senses, विनिवर्तन्ते turn away, निराहारस्य abstinent, देहिनः of the man, रसवर्जम् leaving the longing, रसः loving (taste), अपि even, अस्य of his, परम् the Supreme, दृष्ट्वा having seen, निवर्तते turns away.

59. The objects of the senses turn away from the abstinent man leaving the longing (behind); but his longing also turns away on seeing the Supreme.

Commentary: Knowledge of the Self alone can destroy *in toto* the subtle Vasanas (latent tendencies) and all the subtle desires, all subtle attachments and even the longing for objects. By practising severe austerities, by abandoning the sensual objects, the objects of the senses may turn away from the ascetic but the relish or taste or longing for the objects will still remain.

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥६०॥

यततः of the striving, हि indeed, अपि even, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya (son of Kunti), पुरुषस्य of man, विपश्चितः (of the) wise, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, प्रमाथीनि turbulent, हरन्ति carry away, प्रसभम् violently, मनः the mind.

60. The turbulent senses, O Arjuna, do violently carry away the mind of a wise man though he be striving (to control them).

Commentary: The aspirant should first bring the senses under his control. The senses are like horses. If you keep the horses under your perfect control you can reach your destination safely. Turbulent horses will throw you down on the way. Even so the turbulent senses will hurl you down into the objects of the senses and you cannot reach your spiritual destination, viz., Param Dhama (the supreme abode) or the abode of eternal peace and immortality or Moksha (final liberation). (*Cf.* III. 33; V. 14)

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६१॥

तानि them, सर्वाणि all, संयम्य having restrained, युक्तः joined, आसीत should sit, मत्परः intent on Me, वशे under control, हि indeed, यस्य whose, इन्द्रियाणि senses, तस्य his, प्रज्ञा wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता is settled.

61. Having restrained them all he should sit steadfast, intent on Me; his wisdom is steady whose senses are under control.

Commentary: He should control the senses and sit focussed on Me as the Supreme, with a calm mind. The wisdom of the Yogi who thus seated has brought all his senses under subjugation is doubtless quite steady. He is established in the Self. Sri Sankaracharya explains *Asita Matparah* as "He should sit contemplating: 'I am no other than He'." (*Cf.* II. 64)

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥६२॥

ध्यायतः thinking, विषयान् (on) objects of the senses, पुंसः of a man, सङ्गः attachment, तेषु in them, उपजायते arises, सङ्गात् from attachment, संजायते is born, कामः desire, कामात् from desire, क्रोधः anger, अभिजायते arises.

62. When a man thinks of the objects, attachment for them arises; from attachment desire is born; from desire anger arises.

Commentary: When a man thinks of the beauty and the pleasant and alluring features of the sense-objects he becomes attached to them. He then regards them as something worthy of acquisition and possession and hankers after them. He develops a strong desire to possess them. Then he endeavours his level best to obtain them. When his desire is frustrated by some cause or other, anger arises in his mind. If anybody puts any obstruction in his way of obtaining the objects he hates him, fights with him and develops hostility towards him. (*Cf.* II. 64)

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥६३॥

क्रोधात् from anger, भवति comes, संमोहः delusion, संमोहात् from delusion, स्मृतिविभ्रमः loss of memory, स्मृतिभ्रंशात् from loss of memory, बुद्धिनाशः the destruction of discrimination, बुद्धिनाशात् from the destruction of discrimination, प्रणश्यति (he) perishes.

63. From anger comes delusion; from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination; from the destruction of discrimination he perishes.

Commentary: From anger arises delusion. When a man becomes angry he loses his power of discrimination between right and wrong. He will speak and do anything he likes. He will be swept away by the impulse of passion and emotion and will act irrationally.

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥६४॥

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैः free from attraction and repulsion, तु but, विषयान् objects, इन्द्रियैः with senses, चरन् moving (amongst), आत्मवश्यैः self-restrained, विधेयात्मा the self-controlled, प्रसादम् to peace, अधिगच्छति attains.

64. But the self-controlled man, moving among the objects with the senses under restraint and free from attraction and repulsion, attains to peace.

Commentary: The mind and the senses are naturally endowed with the two currents of attraction and repulsion. Therefore, the mind and the senses like certain objects and dislike certain other objects. But the disciplined man moves among sense-objects with the mind and the senses free from attraction and repulsion and mastered by the Self, attains to the peace of the Eternal. The senses and the mind obey his will, as the disciplined self has a very strong will. The disciplined self takes only those objects which are quite necessary for the maintenance of the body without any love or hatred. He never takes those objects which are forbidden by the scriptures.

In this verse Lord Krishna gives the answer to Arjuna's fourth question, "How does a sage of steady wisdom move about?" (*Cf.* III. 7, 19, 25; XVIII. 9)

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥६५॥

प्रसादे in peace, सर्वदुःखानाम् (of) all pains, हानिः destruction, अस्य of him, उपजायते arises (or happens), प्रसन्नचेतसः of the tranquil-minded, हि because, आशु soon, बुद्धिः intellect (or reason), पर्यवतिष्ठते becomes steady.

65. In that peace all pains are destroyed; for the intellect of the tranquil-minded soon becomes steady.

Commentary: When the mental peace is attained, there is no hankering after sense-objects. The Yogi has perfect mastery over his reason. The intellect abides in the Self. It is quite steady The miseries of the body and the mind come to an end.

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥६६॥

न not, अस्ति is, बुद्धिः knowledge (of the Self), अयुक्तस्य of the unsteady, न not, च and, अयुक्तस्य of the unsteady, भावना meditation, न not, च and, अभावयतः of the unmeditated, शान्तिः peace, अशान्तस्य of the peaceless, कुतः whence, सुखम् happiness.

66. There is no knowledge of the Self to the unsteady and to the unsteady no meditation is possible, and to the unmeditative there can be no peace, and to the man who has no peace, how can there be happiness?

Commentary: The man who cannot fix his mind in meditation cannot have knowledge of the Self. The unsteady man cannot practise meditation. He cannot have even intense devotion to Self-knowledge nor can he have burning longing for liberation or Moksha. He who does not practise meditation cannot possess peace of mind. How can the man who has no peace of mind enjoy happiness?

Desire or Trishna (thirsting for sense-objects) is the enemy of peace. There cannot be an iota or tinge of happiness for a man who is thirsting for sensual objects. The mind will be ever restless, and will be hankering for the objects. Only when this thirsting dies, does man enjoy peace. Only then can he meditate and rest in the Self.

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥६७॥

इन्द्रियाणाम् senses, हि for, चरताम् wandering, यत् which, मनः mind, अनुविधीयते follows, तत् that, अस्य his, हरति carries away, प्रज्ञाम् discrimination, वायुः the wind, नावम् boat, इव like, अम्भसि in the water.

67. For the mind, which follows in the wake of the wandering senses, carries away his discrimination, as the wind (carries away) a boat on the waters.

Commentary: The mind which constantly dwells on the sensual objects and moves in company with the senses destroys altogether the discrimination of the man. Just as the wind carries away a boat from its course, so also the mind carries away the aspirant from his spiritual path and turns him towards the objects of the senses.

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥

तस्मात् therefore, यस्य whose, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, निगृहीतानि restrained, सर्वशः completely, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः from the sense-objects, तस्य his, प्रज्ञा knowledge, प्रतिष्ठिता is steady.

68. Therefore, O mighty-armed Arjuna, his knowledge is steady whose senses are completely restrained from sense-objects.

Commentary: When the senses are completely controlled, the mind cannot wander wildly in the sensual grooves. It becomes steady like the lamp in a windless place. The Yogi is now established in the Self and his knowledge is steady. (*Cf.* III. 7)

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

या which, निशा night, सर्वभूतानाम् of all beings, तस्याम् in that, जागर्ति wakes, संयमी the self-controlled, यस्याम् in which, जाग्रति wake,

भूतानि all beings, सा that, निशा night, पश्यतः (of the) seeing, मुनेः of the Muni.

69. That which is night to all beings, in that the self-controlled man is awake; when all beings are awake, that is night for the Muni (sage) who sees.

Commentary: That which is real for the worldly-minded people is illusion for the sage, and *vice versa*. The sage lives in the Self. This is *day* for him. He is unconscious of the worldly phenomena. They are *night* for him, as it were. The ordinary man is unconscious of his real nature. Life in the spirit is night for him. He is experiencing the objects of sensual enjoyment. This is day for him. The Self is a non-entity for him! For a sage this world is a non-entity.

The worldly-minded people are in utter darkness as they have no knowledge of the Self. What is darkness for them is all light for the sage. The Self, Atman or Brahman is night for the worldly-minded persons. But the sage is fully awake. He is directly cognising the supreme Reality, the Light of lights. He is full of illumination and Atma-Jnana or knowledge of the Self.

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥७०॥

आपूर्यमाणम् filled from all sides, अचलप्रतिष्ठम् based in stillness, समुद्रम् ocean, आपः water, प्रविशन्ति enter, यद्वत् as, तद्वत् so, कामाः desires, यम् whom, प्रविशन्ति enter, सर्वे all, सः he, शान्तिम् peace, आप्नोति attains, न not, कामकामी desirer of desires.

70. He attains peace into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean which, filled from all sides, remains unmoved; but not the man who is full of desires.

Commentary: Just as the ocean filled with waters from all sides remains unmoved, so also the sage who is resting in his own Svarupa or the Self is not a bit affected though desires of all sorts enter from all sides. The sage attains peace or liberation but not he who longs for objects of sensual enjoyment and entertains various desires. (*Cf.* XVIII. 53, 54)

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शांतिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥

विहाय abandoning, कामान् desires, यः that, सर्वान् all, पुमान् man, चरति moves about, निःस्पृहः free from longing, निर्ममः devoid of 'mine-ness', निरहंकारः without egoism, सः he, शान्तिम् to peace, अधिगच्छति attains.

71. That man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without longing, without the sense of mine and without egoism.

Commentary: That man who lives destitute of longing, abandoning all desires, without the senses of 'I' and 'mine', who is satisfied with the bare necessities of life, who does not care even for those bare necessities of life, who has no attachment even for the bare necessities of life, attains Moksha or eternal peace. (*Cf.* II. 55)

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥७२॥

एषा this, ब्राह्मी of Brahmic, स्थितिः state, पार्थ O Partha, न not, एनाम् this, प्राप्य having obtained, विमुह्यति is deluded, स्थित्वा being established, अस्याम् in this, अन्तकाले at the end of life, अपि even, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् oneness with Brahman, ऋच्छति attains.

72. This is the Brahmic seat (eternal state), O son of Pritha. Attaining to this, none is deluded. Being established therein, even at the end of life, one attains to oneness with Brahman.

Commentary: The state described in the previous verse—to renounce everything and to live in Brahman—is the Brahmic state or the state of Brahman. If one attains to this state one is never deluded. He attains Moksha if he stays in that state even at the hour of his death. It is needless to say that he who gets established in Brahman throughout his life attains to the state of Brahman or Brahma-Nirvana. (*Cf.* VIII. 5, 6)

Maharshi Vidyaranya says in his Panchadasi that *Antakala* here means "the moment at which Avidya or mutual superimposition of the Self and the not-Self ends."

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
सांख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ।।

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the second discourse entitled:

The Sankhya Yoga.

अथ तृतीयोऽध्याय:

THIRD DISCOURSE

कर्मयोग:

THE YOGA OF ACTION

अर्जुन उवाच

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥१॥

ज्यायसी superior, चेत् if, कर्मणः than action, ते by Thee, मता thought, बुद्धिः knowledge, जनार्दन O Janardana, तत् then, किम् why, कर्मणि in action, घोरे terrible, माम् me, नियोजयसि Thou engagest, केशव O Kesava.

Arjuna said:

1. If Thou thinkest that knowledge is superior to action, O Krishna, why then, O Kesava, dost Thou ask me to engage in this terrible action?

Commentary: In verses 49, 50 and 51 of chapter II, Lord Krishna has spoken very highly about Buddhi Yoga. He again asks Arjuna to fight. That is the reason why Arjuna is perplexed now.

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥२॥

व्यामिश्रेण perplexing, इव as it were, वाक्येन with speech, बुद्धिम् understanding, मोहयसि (Thou) confusest, इव as it were, मे my, तत् that, एकम् one, वद tell, निश्चित्य for certain, येन by which, श्रेयः bliss (the good or the highest), अहम् I, आप्नुयाम् may attain.

2. With this apparently perplexing speech, Thou confusest, as it were, my understanding; therefore tell me that one way for certain by which I may attain bliss.

Commentary: Arjuna says to Lord Krishna, “Teach me one of the two, knowledge or action, by which I may attain to the highest good or bliss or Moksha.” (*Cf.* V. 1)

श्री भगवानुवाच

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥३॥

लोके in world, अस्मिन् in this, द्विविधा twofold, निष्ठा path, पुरा previously, प्रोक्ता said, मया by Me, अनघ O sinless one, ज्ञानयोगेन by the path of knowledge, सांख्यानाम् of the Sankhyas, कर्मयोगेन by the path of action, योगिनाम् of the Yogins.

The Blessed Lord said:

3. In this world there is a twofold path, as I said before, O sinless one; the path of knowledge of the Sankhyas and the path of action of the Yogins.

Commentary: The path of knowledge of the Sankhyas (Jnana Yoga) was described by Lord Krishna in chapter II, verses 11 to 38; the path of action (Karma Yoga) from 40 to 53.

Pura Prokta may also mean “In the beginning of creation the twofold path was given by Me to this world.”

Those who are endowed with the four means and who have sharp, subtle intellect and bold understanding are fit for Jnana Yoga. Those who have a tendency or inclination for work are fit for Karma Yoga. (The *four means* are discrimination, dispassion, sixfold virtues, and longing for liberation. The sixfold virtues are: control of the mind, control of the senses, fortitude (endurance), turning away from the objects of the world, faith and tranquillity.)

It is not possible for a man to practise the two Yogas simultaneously. Karma Yoga is a means to an end. It purifies the heart and prepares the aspirant for the reception of knowledge. The Karma Yogi should take up Jnana Yoga as soon as his heart is purified. Jnana Yoga takes the aspirant directly to the goal without any extraneous help. (*Cf.* V. 5)

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥४॥

न not, कर्मणाम् of actions, अनारम्भात् from non-performance, नैष्कर्म्यम् actionlessness, पुरुषः man, अश्नुते reaches, न not, च and, संन्यसनात् from renunciation, एव only, सिद्धिम् perfection, समधिगच्छति attains.

4. Not by non-performance of actions does man reach actionlessness; nor by mere renunciation does he attain to perfection.

Commentary: Actionlessness *(Naishkarmyam)* and perfection *(Siddhi)* are synonymous. The sage who has attained to perfection or reached the state of actionlessness rests in his own essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute (Satchidananda Svarupa). He has neither necessity nor desire for action as a means to an end. He has perfect satisfaction in the Self.

One attains to the state of actionlessness by gaining the knowledge of the Self. If a man simply sits quiet by abandoning action you cannot say that he has attained to the state of actionlessness. His mind will be planning, scheming and speculating. Thought is real action. The sage who is free from affirmative thoughts, wishes, and likes and dislikes, who has the knowledge of the Self can be said to have attained to the state of actionlessness.

No one can reach perfection or freedom from action or knowledge of the Self by mere renunciation or by simply giving up activities without possessing the knowledge of the Self. (*Cf.* XVIII. 49)

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥५॥

नहि not, कश्चित् anyone, क्षणम् a moment, अपि even, जातु verily, तिष्ठति remains, अकर्मकृत् without performing action, कार्यते is made to do, हि for, अवशः helpless, कर्म action, सर्वः all, प्रकृतिजैः born of Prakriti, गुणैः by the qualities.

5. Verily none can ever remain for even a moment without performing action; for everyone is made to act helplessly indeed by the qualities born of Nature.

Commentary: The *Gunas* (qualities of Nature) are three, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattva is harmony or light or purity; Rajas is passion or motion; Tamas is inertia or darkness. Sattvic actions help a man to attain to Moksha. Rajasic and Tamasic actions bind a man to Samsara.

These qualities cannot affect a man who has knowledge of the Self. He has crossed over these qualities. He has become a Gunatita (one who has transcended the qualities of Nature). The ignorant man who has no knowledge of the Self and who is swayed by Avidya or nescience is driven helplessly to action by the Gunas. (*Cf.* IV. 16, XVIII. 11)

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥६॥

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि organs of action, संयम्य restraining, यः who, आस्ते sits, मनसा by the mind, स्मरन् remembering, इन्द्रियार्थान् sense-objects, विमूढात्मा of deluded understanding, मिथ्याचारः hypocrite, सः he, उच्यते is called.

6. He who, restraining the organs of action, sits thinking of the sense-objects in mind, he of deluded understanding is called a hypocrite.

Commentary: The five organs of action, *Karma Indriyas,* are Vak (organ of speech), Pani (hands), Padam (feet), Upastha (genitals) and Guda (anus). They are born of the Rajasic portion of the five Tanmatras or subtle elements; Vak from the Akasa Tanmatra (ether), Pani from the Vayu Tanmatra (air), Padam from the Agni Tanmatra (fire), Upastha from the Apas Tanmatra (water), and Guda from the Prithivi Tanmatra (earth). That man who, restraining the organs of action, sits revolving in his mind thoughts regarding the objects of the senses is a man of sinful conduct. He is self-deluded. He is a veritable hypocrite.

The organs of action must be controlled. The thoughts should also be controlled. The mind should be firmly fixed on the Lord. Only then will you become a true Yogi. Only then will you attain to Self-realisation.

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥७॥

यः whose, तु but, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, मनसा by the mind, नियम्य controlling, आरभते commences, अर्जुन O Arjuna, कर्मेन्द्रियैः by the organs of action, कर्मयोगम् Karma Yoga, असक्तः unattached, सः he, विशिष्यते excels.

7. But whosoever, controlling the senses by the mind, O Arjuna, engages himself in Karma Yoga with the organs of action, without attachment, he excels.

Commentary: If anyone performs actions with his organs of action (viz., hands, feet, organ of speech, etc.) controlling the organs of knowledge by the mind, and without expectation of the fruits of the actions and without egoism, he is certainly more worthy than the other who is a hypocrite or a man of false conduct. (*Cf.* II. 64, 68; IV. 21)

The five organs of knowledge are the eyes, the ears, the nose, the skin and the sense of taste (tongue).

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥८॥

नियतम् bounden (prescribed or obligatory), कुरु perform, कर्म action, त्वम् thou, कर्म action, ज्यायः superior, हि for, अकर्मणः than inaction, शरीरयात्रा maintenance of the body, अपि even, च and, ते thy, न not, प्रसिद्ध्येत् would be possible, अकर्मणः by inaction.

8. Do thou perform (thy) bounden duty, for action is superior to inaction and even the maintenance of the body would not be possible for thee by inaction.

Commentary: *Niyatam Karma* is an obligatory duty which one is bound to perform. The non-performance of the bounden duties causes demerit. The performance of the obligatory duties is not a means for the attainment of a specific result. The performance does not cause any merit.

Living itself involves several natural and unavoidable actions which have to be performed by all. It is ignorance to say, "I can live doing nothing."

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसंगः समाचर ॥९॥

यज्ञार्थात् for the sake of sacrifice, कर्मणः of action, अन्यत्र otherwise, लोकः the world, अयम् this, कर्मबन्धनः bound by action, तदर्थम् for that sake, कर्म action, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, मुक्तसंगः free from attachment, समाचर perform.

9. The world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice; do thou, therefore, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), perform action for that sake (for sacrifice alone), free from attachment.

Commentary: *Yajna* means sacrifice or religious rite or any unselfish action done with a pure motive. It means also Isvara. The Taittiriya Samhita (of the Veda) says "Yajna verily is Vishnu" (1-7-4). If anyone does actions for the sake of the Lord, he is not bound. His heart is purified by performing actions for the sake of the Lord. Where this spirit of unselfishness does not govern the action, it will bind one to Samsara however good or glorious it may be. (*Cf.* II. 48)

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥१०॥

सहयज्ञाः together with sacrifice, प्रजाः mankind, सृष्ट्वा having created, पुरा in the beginning, उवाच said, प्रजापतिः Prajapati, अनेन by this, प्रसविष्यध्वम् shall ye propagate, एषः this, वः your, अस्तु let be, इष्टकामधुक् milch cow of desires.

10. The Creator, having in the beginning (of creation) created mankind together with sacrifice, said, "By this shall ye propagate; let this be the milch cow of your desires (the cow which yields all the desired objects)."

Commentary: *Prajapati* is the Creator or Brahma. *Kamadhuk* is another name for the cow *Kamadhenu.*

Kamadhenu is the cow of Indra from which everyone can milk whatever one desires. (*Cf.* VIII. 4; IX. 24, 27; X. 25)

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ।।११।।

देवान् the gods, भावयत nourish (ye), अनेन with this, ते those, देवाः gods, भावयन्तु may nourish, वः you, परस्परम् one another, भावयन्तः nourishing, श्रेयः good, परम् the highest, अवाप्स्यथ shall attain.

11. With this do ye nourish the gods and may those gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another, ye shall attain to the highest good.

Commentary: *Deva* literally means "the shining one." By this sacrifice you nourish the gods such as Indra. The gods shall nourish you with rain, etc. The highest good is the attainment of the knowledge of the Self which frees one from the round of births and deaths. The highest good may mean the attainment of heaven also. The fruit depends upon the motive of the aspirant.

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ।।१२।।

इष्टान् desired, भोगान् objects, हि so, वः to you, देवाः the gods, दास्यन्ते will give, यज्ञभाविताः nourished by sacrifice, तैः by them, दत्तान् give, अप्रदाय without offering, एभ्यः to them, यः who, भुङ्क्ते enjoys, स्तेनः thief, एव verily, सः he.

12. The gods, nourished by the sacrifice, will give you the desired objects. So, he who enjoys the objects given by the gods without offering (in return) to them, is verily a thief.

Commentary: When the gods are pleased with your sacrifices, they will bestow on you all the desired objects such as children, cattle, property, etc. He who enjoys what has been given to him by the gods, i.e., he who gratifies the cravings of his own body and the senses without offering anything to the gods in return is a veritable thief. He is really a dacoit of the property of the gods.

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ।।१३।।

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः who eat the remnants of the sacrifice, सन्तः the righteous, मुच्यन्ते are freed, सर्वकिल्बिषैः from all sins, भुञ्जते eat, ते those, तु indeed, अघम् sin, पापाः sinful ones, ये who, पचन्ति cook, आत्मकारणात् for their own sake.

13. The righteous who eat the remnants of the sacrifice are freed from all sins; but those sinful ones who cook food (only) for their own sake verily eat sin.

Commentary: Those who, after performing the five great sacrifices, eat the remnants of the food are freed from all the sins committed by these five agents of insect slaughter, viz., (1) the pestle and mortar, (2) the grinding stone, (3) the fireplace, (4) the place where the water-pot is kept, and (5) the broom. These are the five places where injury to life is daily committed. The sins are washed away by the performance of the five Maha-Yajnas or great sacrifices which every Dvija (twice-born or the people belonging to the first three castes in Hindu society, especially the Brahmin) ought to perform:

1. *Deva-Yajna:* Offering sacrifices to the gods which will satisfy them,
2. *Brahma-Yajna* or *Rishi-Yajna:* Teaching and reciting the scriptures which will satisfy Brahman and the Rishis,
3. *Pitri-Yajna:* Offering libations of water to one's ancestors which will satisfy the manes,
4. *Nri-Yajna:* The feeding of the hungry and the guests, and,
5. *Bhuta-Yajna:* The feeding of the sub-human species, such as animals, birds, etc.

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ।।१४।।

अन्नात् from food, भवन्ति come forth, भूतानि beings, पर्जन्यात् from rain, अन्नसम्भवः production of food, यज्ञात् from sacrifice, भवति arises, पर्जन्यः rain, यज्ञः sacrifice, कर्मसमुद्भवः born of action.

14. From food come forth beings; from rain food is produced; from sacrifice arises rain and sacrifice is born of action.

Commentary: Here *Yajna* means "Apurva" or the subtle principle or the unseen form which a sacrifice assumes between the time of its performance and the time when its fruits manifest themselves.

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१५॥

कर्म action, ब्रह्मोद्भवम् arisen from Brahma, विद्धि know, ब्रह्म Brahma, अक्षरसमुद्भवम् arisen from the Imperishable, तस्मात् therefore, सर्वगतम् all-pervading, ब्रह्म Brahma, नित्यम् ever, यज्ञे in sacrifice, प्रतिष्ठितम् (is) established.

15. Know thou that action comes from Brahma and Brahma comes from the Imperishable. Therefore, the all-pervading (Brahma) ever rests in sacrifice.

Commentary: *Brahma* may mean "Veda." Just as the breath comes out of a man, so also the Veda is the breath of the Imperishable or the Omniscient. The Veda ever rests in the sacrifice, i.e., it deals chiefly with sacrifices and the ways of their performance. (*Cf.* IV. 24 to 32)

Karma: Action, *Brahmoḍbhavam*: arisen from the injunctions of the Vedas.

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥१६॥

एवम् thus, प्रवर्तितम् set revolving, चक्रम् wheel, न not, अनुवर्तयति follows, इह here, यः who, अघायुः living in sin, इन्द्रियारामः rejoicing in the senses, मोघम् in vain, पार्थ O Partha, सः he, जीवति lives.

16. He who does not follow here the wheel thus set revolving, who is of sinful life, rejoicing in the senses, he lives in vain, O Arjuna.

Commentary: This is the wheel of action set in motion by the Creator on the basis of the Veda and sacrifice. He who does not follow the wheel by studying the Vedas and performing the sacrifices prescribed therein but who indulges only in sensual pleasures lives in vain. He is wasting his life. He is leading a worthless life indeed.

One who does not live in accordance with this law and who is selfish commits sin. He violates the law of the Creator and that is the worst sin.

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥१७॥

यः who, तु but, आत्मरतिः who rejoices in the Self, एव only, स्यात् may be, आत्मतृप्तः satisfied in the Self, च and, मानवः the man, आत्मनि in the Self, एव only, च and, सन्तुष्टः contented, तस्य his, कार्यम् work to be done, न not, विद्यते is.

17. But for that man who rejoices only in the Self, who is satisfied with the Self and who is content in the Self alone, verily there is nothing to do.

Commentary: The sage does not depend on external objects for his happiness. He is quite satisfied with the Self. He finds his joy, bliss and contentment within his own Self. For such a sage who has knowledge of the Self, there is nothing to do. He has already done all actions. He has satisfied all his desires. He has complete satisfaction. (*Cf.* II. 55)

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥१८॥

न not, एव even, तस्य of him, कृतेन by action, अर्थः concern, न not, अकृतेन by actions not done, इह here, कश्चन any, न not, च and, अस्य of this man, सर्वभूतेषु in all beings, कश्चित् any, अर्थव्यपाश्रयः depending for any object.

18. For him there is no interest whatever in what is done or what is not done; nor does he depend on any being for any object.

Commentary: The sage who is thus rejoicing in the Self does not gain anything by doing any action. For him really no purpose is served by any action. No evil (Pratyavaya Dosha) can touch him from inaction. He does not lose anything from inaction. He need not depend upon anybody to gain a particular object. He need not exert himself to get the favour of anybody.

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥१९॥

तस्मात् therefore, असक्तः without attachment, सततम् always, कार्यम् which should be done, कर्म action, समाचर perform, असक्तः without attachment, हि because, आचरन् performing, कर्म action, परम् the Supreme, आप्नोति attains, पूरुषः man.

19. Therefore without attachment, do thou always perform action which should be done; for by performing action without attachment man reaches the Supreme.

Commentary: If you perform actions without attachment, for the sake of the Lord, you will attain to Self-realisation through purity of heart. (*Cf.* II. 64; IV. 19, 23; XVIII. 49)

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥२०॥

कर्मणा by action, एव only, हि verily, संसिद्धिम् perfection, आस्थिताः attained, जनकादयः Janaka and others, लोकसंग्रहम् protection of the masses, एवापि only, संपश्यन् having in view, कर्तुम् to perform, अर्हसि thou shouldst.

20. Janaka and others attained perfection verily by action only; even with a view to the protection of the masses thou shouldst perform action.

Commentary: *Samsiddhi* is Moksha (perfection or liberation). Janaka, (Asvapati) and others had perfect knowledge of the Self, and yet they performed actions in order to set an example to the masses. They worked for the guidance of men.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥२१॥

यद्यत् whatsoever, आचरति does, श्रेष्ठः the best, तत्तत् that, एव only, इतरः the other, जनः people, सः he (that great man), यत् what, प्रमाणम्

standard (authority, demonstration), कुरुते does, लोकः the world (people), तत् that, अनुवर्तते follows.

21. Whatsoever a great man does, that the other men also do; whatever he sets up as the standard, that the world (mankind) follows.

Commentary: Man is a social animal. He is an imitating animal too. He takes his ideas of right and wrong from those whom he regards as his moral superior. Whatever a great man follows, the same is considered as an authority by his followers. They try to follow him. They endeavour to walk in his footsteps.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ।।२२।।

न not, मे my, पार्थ O Partha, अस्ति is, कर्तव्यम् to be done (duty), त्रिषु in the three, लोकेषु worlds, किञ्चन anything, न not, अनवाप्तम् unattained, अवाप्तव्यम् to be attained, वर्ते am, एव also, च and, कर्मणि in action.

22. There is nothing in the three worlds, O Arjuna, that should be done by Me, nor is there anything unattained that should be attained; yet I engage Myself in action.

Commentary: I am the Lord of the universe and therefore I have no personal grounds to engage Myself in action. I have nothing to achieve as I have all divine wealth, as the wealth of the universe is Mine, and yet I engage Myself in action.

Why do you not follow My example? Why do you not endeavour to prevent the masses from following the wrong path by setting an example yourself? If you set an example, people will follow you as you are a leader with noble qualities.

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ।।२३।।

यदि if, हि surely, अहम् I, न not, वर्तेयम् engage Myself in action, जातु ever, कर्मणि in action, अतन्द्रितः unwearied, मम My, वर्त्म path, अनुवर्तन्ते follow, मनुष्याः men, पार्थ O Partha, सर्वशः in every way.

23. For, should I not ever engage Myself in action, unwearied, men would in every way follow My path, O Arjuna.

Commentary: If I remain inactive, people also will imitate Me and keep quiet. They will all become Tamasic and pass into a state of inertia.

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ।।२४।।

उत्सीदेयुः would perish, इमे these, लोकाः worlds, न not, कुर्याम् would do, कर्म action, चेत् if, अहम् I, सङ्करस्य of confusion of castes, च and, कर्ता author, स्याम् would be, उपहन्याम् would destroy, इमाः these, प्रजाः beings.

24. These worlds would perish if I did not perform action; I should be the author of confusion of castes and destruction of these beings.

Commentary: If I did not engage in action, people would also be inactive. They would not do their duties according to the Varnasrama Dharma (code of morals governing their own order and stage of life). Hence confusion of castes would arise. I would have to destroy these beings.

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ।।२५।।

सक्ताः attached, कर्मणि to action, अविद्वांसः the ignorant, यथा as, कुर्वन्ति act, भारत O Bharata, कुर्यात् should act, विद्वान् the wise, तथा so, असक्तः unattached, चिकीर्षुः wishing, लोकसंग्रहम् the welfare of the world.

25. As the ignorant men act from attachment to action, O Bharata (Arjuna), so should the wise act without attachment, wishing the welfare of the world.

Commentary: The ignorant man works in expectation of fruits. He says, "I will do such and such work and will get such and such fruit." But the wise man who knows the Self, serves not for his own end. He should so act that the world, following his example, would attain peace, harmony, purity of heart, divine light and knowledge. A wise man is one who knows the Self. (*Cf.* II. 64; III. 19; XVIII. 49)

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान् युक्तः समाचरन् ।।२६।।

न not, बुद्धिभेदम् unsettlement in the mind, जनयेत् should produce, अज्ञानाम् of the ignorant, कर्मसङ्गिनाम् of the persons attached to actions, जोषयेत् should engage, सर्वकर्माणि all actions, विद्वान् the wise, युक्तः balanced, समाचरन् performing.

26. Let no wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people who are attached to action; he should engage them in all actions, himself fulfilling them with devotion.

Commentary: An ignorant man says to himself, "I shall do this action and thereby enjoy its fruit." A wise man should not unsettle his belief. On the contrary he himself should set an example by performing his duties diligently but without attachment. The wise man should also persuade the ignorant never to neglect their duties. If need be, he should place before them in vivid colours the happiness they would enjoy here and hereafter by discharging such duties. When their hearts get purified in course of time, the wise man could sow the seeds of Karma Yoga (selfless service without desire) in them.

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ।।२७।।

प्रकृतेः of nature, क्रियमाणानि are performed, गुणैः by the qualities, कर्माणि actions, सर्वशः in all cases, अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा one whose mind is deluded by egosim, कर्ता doer, अहम् I, इति thus, मन्यते thinks.

27. All actions are wrought in all cases by the qualities of Nature only. He whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks, "I am the doer."

Commentary: *Prakriti* or Pradhana or Nature is that state in which the three Gunas, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas exist in a state of equilibrium. When this equilibrium is disturbed, creation begins; body, senses, mind, etc., are formed. The man who is deluded by egoism identifies the Self with the body, mind, the life force and the senses and ascribes to the Self all the attributes of the body and the senses. He, therefore, thinks through ignorance, "I am the doer." In reality the Gunas of Nature perform all actions. (*Cf.* III. 29; V. 9; IX. 9, 10; XIII. 21, 24, 30, 32; XVIII. 13, 14)

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ।।२८।।

तत्त्ववित् the knower of the Truth, तु but, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, गुणकर्मविभागयोः of the divisions of qualities and functions, गुणाः the qualities (in the shape of senses), गुणेषु amidst the qualities (in the shape of objects), वर्तन्ते remain, इति thus, मत्वा knowing, न not, सज्जते is attached.

28. But he who knows the Truth, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), about the divisions of the qualities and (their) functions, knowing that the Gunas as senses move amidst the Gunas as the sense-objects, is not attached.

Commentary: He who knows the truth that the Self is entirely distinct from the three Gunas and actions does not become attached to the actions. He who knows the truth about the classification of the Gunas and their respective functions understands that the qualities as sense-organs move amidst the qualities as sense-objects. Therefore he is not attached to the actions. He knows, "I am Akarta—I am not the doer." (*Cf.* XIV. 23)

प्रकृतेर्गुणसम्मूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ।।२९।।

प्रकृतेः of nature, गुणसंमूढाः persons deluded by the Gunas, सज्जन्ते are attached, गुणकर्मसु in the functions of the qualities, तान् those, अकृत्स्नविदः of imperfect knowledge, मन्दान् the foolish (the dull-witted), कृत्स्नवित् man of perfect knowledge, न not, विचालयेत् should unsettle.

29. Those deluded by the qualities of Nature are attached to the functions of the qualities. The man of perfect knowledge should not unsettle the foolish one who is of imperfect knowledge.

Commentary: The ignorant people do action with the expectation of fruits. The wise people who have the knowledge of the Self should not distract the faith or conviction or belief of such ignorant persons. If they unsettle their minds they will give up actions and become victims of inertia. They will lead an idle life. They should be encouraged by the wise to do actions of the Sakama type (actions for the sake of their fruits) in the beginning. The wise ones should turn the minds of the ignorant by giving them gradual instructions on Karma Yoga (Yoga of selfless, desireless action) and its benefits, viz., purification of the heart that leads to the attainment of Self-realisation.

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥३०॥

मयि in Me, सर्वाणि all, कर्माणि actions, संन्यस्य renouncing, अध्यात्मचेतसा with the mind centred in the Self, निराशीः free from hope, निर्ममः free from egoism, भूत्वा having become, युध्यस्व fight (thou), विगतज्वरः free from (mental) fever.

30. Renouncing all actions in Me, with the mind centred in the Self, free from hope and egoism, and from (mental) fever, do thou fight.

Commentary: Surrender all the actions to Me with the thought, "I perform all actions for the sake of the Lord."

Fever means grief, sorrow. (*Cf.* V. 10; XVIII. 66)

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥३१॥

ये those who, मे My, मतम् teaching, इदम् this, नित्यम् constantly, अनुतिष्ठन्ति practise, मानवाः men, श्रद्धावन्तः full of faith, अनसूयन्तः not cavilling, मुच्यन्ते are freed, ते they, अपि also, कर्मभिः from actions.

31. Those men who constantly practise this teaching of Mine with faith and without cavilling, they too are freed from actions.

Commentary: *Sraddha* is a mental attitude. It means faith. It is faith in one's own Self, in the scriptures and in the teachings of the spiritual preceptor. It is a compound of the higher emotion of faith, reverence and humility.

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥३२॥

ये those who, तु but, एतत् this, अभ्यसूयन्तः carping at, न not, अनुतिष्ठन्ति practise, मे My, मतम् teaching, सर्वज्ञानविमूढान् deluded of all knowledge, तान् them, विद्धि know, नष्टान् ruined, अचेतसः devoid of discrimination.

32. But those who carp at My teaching and do not practise it, deluded of all knowledge, and devoid of discrimination, know them to be doomed to destruction.

Commentary: The pig-headed people who are obstinate, who find fault with the teachings of the Lord and who do not practise them are certainly doomed to destruction. They are incorrigible and senseless persons indeed.

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

सदृशम् in accordance, चेष्टते acts, स्वस्याः of his own, प्रकृतेः of nature, ज्ञानवान् a wise man, अपि even, प्रकृतिम् to nature, यान्ति follow, भूतानि beings, निग्रहः restraint, किम् what, करिष्यति will do.

33. Even a wise man acts in accordance with his own nature; beings will follow Nature; what can restraint do?

Commentary: He who reads this verse will come to the conclusion that there is no scope for man's personal exertion. It is not so. Read the following verse. It clearly indicates that man can conquer Nature if he rises above the sway of Raga-Dvesha (love and hatred).

The passionate and ignorant man only comes under the sway of his natural propensities, and his lower nature. He cannot have any restraint over the senses and the two currents of likes and dislikes. The seeker after Truth who is endowed with the *four means*, and who is constantly practising meditation can easily control Nature. (*Cf.* II. 60; V. 14; XVIII. 59)

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ।।३४।।

इन्द्रियस्य इन्द्रियस्य of each sense, अर्थे in the object, रागद्वेषौ attachment and aversion, व्यवस्थितौ seated, तयोः of these two, न not, वशम् sway, आगच्छेत् should come under, तौ these two, हि verily, अस्य his, परिपन्थिनौ foes.

34. Attachment and aversion for the objects of the senses abide in the senses; let none come under their sway; for, they are his foes.

Commentary: Each sense has got attraction for a pleasant object and aversion for a disagreeable object. If one can control these two currents, viz., attachment and aversion, he will not come under the sway of these two currents. Here lies the scope for personal exertion or Purushartha. Nature which contains the sum total of one's Samskaras or the latent self-productive impressions of the past actions of merit and demerit draws a man to its course through the two currents, attachment and aversion. If one can control these two currents, if he can rise above the sway of love and hate through discrimination and Vichara or right enquiry, he can conquer Nature and attain immortality and eternal bliss. He will no longer be subject to his own nature now. One should always exert to free himself from attachment and aversion to the objects of the senses.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ।।३५।।

श्रेयान् better, स्वधर्मः one's own duty, विगुणः devoid of merit, परधर्मात् than the duty of another, स्वनुष्ठितात् than well discharged, स्वधर्मे in one's own duty, निधनम् death, श्रेयः better, परधर्मः another's duty, भयावहः fraught with fear.

35. Better is one's own duty, though devoid of merit than the duty of another well discharged. Better is death in one's own duty; the duty of another is fraught with fear (is productive of danger).

Commentary: It is indeed better for man to die discharging his own duty though destitute of merit than for him to live doing the duty of another though performed in a perfect manner. For the duty of another has its pitfalls. The duty of a Kshatriya is to fight in a righteous battle. Arjuna must fight. This is his duty. Even if he dies in the discharge of his own duty, it is better for him. He will go to heaven. He should not do the duty of another man. This will bring him peril. He should not stop from fighting and enter the path of renunciation. (*Cf.* XVIII. 47)

अर्जुन उवाच

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥३६॥

अथ now, केन by which, प्रयुक्तः impelled, अयम् this, पापम् sin, चरति does, पूरुषः man, अनिच्छन् not wishing, अपि even, वार्ष्णेय O Varshneya, बलात् by force, इव as it were, नियोजितः constrained.

Arjuna said:

36. But impelled by what does man commit sin, though against his wishes, O Varshneya (Krishna), constrained as it were, by force?

Commentary: *Varshneya* is one born in the family of the Vrishnis, a name of Krishna.

श्री भगवानुवाच

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥३७॥

कामः desire, एषः this, क्रोधः anger, एषः this, रजोगुणसमुद्भवः born of the Rajo-guna, महाशनः all-devouring, महापाप्मा all-sinful, विद्धि know, एनम् this, इह here, वैरिणम् the foe.

The Blessed Lord said:

37. It is desire, it is anger born of the quality of Rajas, all-devouring, all-sinful; know this as the foe here (in this world).

Commentary: *Bhagavan*: *Bhaga* means the six attributes, viz., Jnana (knowledge), Vairagya (dispassion), Kirti (fame), Aishvarya (divine manifestations and excellences), Sri (wealth), and Bala (might). He who possesses these six attributes and who has a perfect knowledge of the origin and the end of the universe is *Bhagavan* or the Lord.

The cause of all sin and wrong action in this world is desire. Anger is desire itself. When a desire is not gratified, the man becomes angry against those who stand as obstacles on the path of fulfilment. The desire is born of the quality of Rajas. When desire arises, it generates Rajas and urges the man to work in order to possess the object. Therefore, know that this desire is man's foe on this earth. (*Cf.* XVI. 21)

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥३८॥

धूमेन by smoke, आव्रियते is enveloped, वह्निः fire, यथा as, आदर्शः a mirror, मलेन by dust, च and, यथा as, उल्बेन by the amnion, आवृतः enveloped, गर्भः embryo, तथा so, तेन by it, इदम् this, आवृतम् enveloped.

38. As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, and as an embryo by the amnion, so is this enveloped by that.

Commentary: *This* means the universe. *This* also means knowledge. *That* means desire.

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥३९॥

आवृतम् enveloped, ज्ञानम् wisdom, एतेन by this, ज्ञानिनः of the wise, नित्यवैरिणा by the constant enemy, कामरूपेण whose form is desire, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, दुष्पूरेण unappeasable, अनलेन by fire, च and.

39. O Arjuna, wisdom is enveloped by this constant enemy of the wise in the form of desire, which is unappeasable as fire.

Commentary: Manu says, "Desire can never be satiated or cooled down by the enjoyment of objects. But as fire blazes forth the more when fed with Ghee (melted butter) and wood, so it grows the more it feeds on the objects of enjoyment. If all the foodstuffs of the earth, all the precious metals, all the animals and all the beautiful women were to pass into the possession of one man endowed with desire, they would still fail to give him satisfaction."

The ignorant man considers desire as his friend when he craves for objects. He welcomes desire for the gratification of the senses; but the wise man knows from experience even before suffering the consequence, that desire will bring only troubles and misery for him. So it is a constant enemy of the wise but not of the ignorant.

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥४०॥

इन्द्रियाणि the senses, मनः the mind, बुद्धिः the intellect, अस्य its, अधिष्ठानम् seat, उच्यते is called, एतैः by these, विमोहयति deludes, एषः this, ज्ञानम् wisdom, आवृत्य having enveloped, देहिनम् the embodied.

40. The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its seat; through these it deludes the embodied by veiling his wisdom.

Commentary: If the abode of the enemy is known it is quite easy to kill him. So Lord Krishna like a wise army general points out to Arjuna the abode of desire so that he may be able to attack it and kill it quite readily.

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥४१॥

तस्मात् therefore, त्वम् you, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, आदौ in the beginning, नियम्य having controlled, भरतर्षभ O best of the Bharatas, पाप्मानम् the sinful, प्रजहि kill, हि surely, एनम् this, ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् the destroyer of knowledge and realisation (wisdom).

41. Therefore, O best of the Bharatas (Arjuna), controlling the senses first, do thou kill this sinful thing, the destroyer of knowledge and realisation.

Commentary: *Jnana* is knowledge obtained through the study of scriptures. This is indirect knowledge or Paroksha Jnana. *Vijnana* is direct knowledge or personal experience or Anubhava through Self-realisation or Aparoksha Jnana. Control the senses first and then kill desire.

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ।।४२।।

इन्द्रियाणि the senses, पराणि superior, आहुः (they) say, इन्द्रियेभ्यः than the senses, परम् superior, मनः the mind, मनसः than the mind, तु but, परा superior, बुद्धिः intellect, यः who, बुद्धेः than the intellect, परतः greater, तु but, सः He.

42. They say that the senses are superior (to the body), superior to the senses is the mind; superior to the mind is the intellect; one who is superior even to the intellect is He (the Self).

Commentary: When compared with the physical body which is gross, external and limited, the senses are certainly superior as they are more subtle, internal and have a wider range of activity. The mind is superior to the senses, as the senses cannot do anything independently without the help of the mind. The mind can perform the functions of the five senses. The intellect is superior to the mind because it is endowed with the faculty of discrimination. When the mind is in a state of doubt, the intellect comes to its rescue. The Self, the Witness, is superior even to the intellect, as the intellect borrows its light from the Self.

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ।।४३।।

एवम् thus, बुद्धेः than the intellect, परम् superior, बुद्ध्वा having known, संस्तभ्य restraining, आत्मानम् the self, आत्मना by the Self, जहि slay thou, शत्रुम् the enemy, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, कामरूपम् of the form of desire, दुरासदम् hard to conquer.

43. Thus knowing Him Who is superior to the intellect and restraining the self by the Self, slay thou, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the enemy in the form of desire, hard to conquer.

Commentary: Restrain the lower self by the higher Self. Subdue the lower mind by the higher mind. It is difficult to conquer desire because it is of a highly complex and incomprehensible nature. But a man of discrimination and dispassion who does constant and intense Sadhana can conquer it quite easily. Desire is the quality of Rajas. If you increase the Sattvic quality in you, you can conquer desire. Rajas cannot stand before Sattva.

Even though desire is hard to conquer, it is not impossible. The simple and direct method is to appeal to the Indwelling Presence (God) through prayer and Japa.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
कर्मयोगो नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the third discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Action.

अथ चतुर्थोऽध्यायः

FOURTH DISCOURSE

ज्ञानविभागयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF WISDOM

श्री भगवानुवाच

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान् मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥

इमम् this, विवस्वते to Vivasvan, योगम् Yoga, प्रोक्तवान् taught, अहम् I, अव्ययम् imperishable, विवस्वान् Vivasvan, मनवे to Manu, प्राह taught, मनुः Manu, इक्ष्वाकवे to Ikshvaku, अब्रवीत् taught.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. I taught this imperishable Yoga to Vivasvan; he told it to Manu; Manu proclaimed it to Ikshvaku.

Commentary: *Vivasvan* means the sun. *Ikshvaku* was the son of Manu. Ikshvaku was the reputed ancestor of the solar dynasty of Kshatriyas.

This Yoga is said to be imperishable because the result or fruit, i.e., Moksha, that can be attained through it is imperishable.

If the rulers of dominions possess a knowledge of the Yoga taught by Me in the preceding two discourses, they can protect the Brahmaṇas and rule their kingdom with justice. So I taught this Yoga to the Sun-god in the beginning of evolution.

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥२॥

एवम् thus, परम्पराप्राप्तम् handed down in regular succession, इमम् this, राजर्षयः the royal sages, विदुः knew, सः this, कालेन by lapse of time, इह here, महता by long, योगः Yoga, नष्टः destroyed, परन्तप O Parantapa.

2. This, handed down thus in regular succession, the royal sages knew. This Yoga, by long lapse of time, has been lost here, O Parantapa (burner of the foes).

Commentary: The *royal sages*: Men who were kings and at the same time sages also, learnt this Yoga.

Arjuna could burn or harass his foes, like the sun, by the heat of his valour and power. Hence the name Parantapa.

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

सः that, एव even, अयम् this, मया by Me, ते to thee, अद्य today, योगः Yoga, प्रोक्तः has been taught, पुरातनः ancient, भक्तः devotee, असि thou art, मे My, सखा friend, च and, इति thus, रहस्यम् secret, हि for, एतत् this, उत्तमम् best.

3. That same ancient Yoga has been today taught to thee by Me, for thou art My devotee and My friend; it is the supreme secret.

Commentary: This Yoga contains profound and subtle teachings. Hence it is the supreme secret which is revealed by the Lord.

अर्जुन उवाच

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥४॥

अपरम् later, भवतः Thy, जन्म birth, परम् prior, जन्म birth, विवस्वतः of Vivasvan, कथम् how, एतत् this, विजानीयाम् am I to understand, त्वम् Thou, आदौ in the beginning, प्रोक्तवान् taughtest, इति thus.

Arjuna said:

4. Later on was Thy birth, and prior to it was the birth of Vivasvan (the Sun); how am I to understand that Thou taughtest this Yoga in the beginning?

Commentary: Thy birth took place later in the house of Vasudeva; Vivasvan or Vivasvat (the Sun) was born earlier in the beginning of evolution. How am I to believe that Thou taughtest this Yoga in the beginning to Vivasvan, and that Thou, the self-same person, hast now taught it to me? I am not able to reconcile this. Be kind enough to enlighten me, O my Lord!

श्री भगवानुवाच

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप ॥५॥

बहूनि many, मे My, व्यतीतानि have passed away, जन्मानि births, तव thy, च and, अर्जुन O Arjuna, तानि them, अहम् I, वेद know, सर्वाणि all, न not, त्वम् thou, वेत्थ knowest, परन्तप O Parantapa.

The Blessed Lord said:

5. Many births of Mine have passed as well as of thine, O Arjuna; I know them all but thou knowest not, O Parantapa (scorcher of foes).

Commentary: You have no intuitional knowledge. The eye of wisdom has not been opened in you on account of your past actions. So your power of vision is limited and therefore you do not know your previous births. But I know them because I am omniscient.

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥

अजः unborn, अपि also, सन् being, अव्ययात्मा of imperishable nature, भूतानाम् of beings, ईश्वरः the Lord, अपि also, सन् being, प्रकृतिम् Nature, स्वाम् My own, अधिष्ठाय governing, संभवामि come into being, आत्ममायया by My own Maya.

6. Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet, governing My own Nature, I am born by My own Maya.

Commentary: Man is bound by Karma. So he takes birth. He is under the clutches of Nature. He is deluded by the three qualities of Nature whereas the Lord has Maya under His perfect control. He rules over Nature, and so He is not under the thraldom of the qualities of Nature. He appears to be born and embodied through His own Maya or illusory power, but is not so in reality. His embodiment is, as a matter of fact, apparent. It cannot affect in the least His true divine nature. (*Cf.* IX. 8)

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

यदा यदा whenever, हि surely, धर्मस्य of righteousness, ग्लानिः decline, भवति is, भारत O Bharata, अभ्युत्थानम् rise, अधर्मस्य of unrighteousness, तदा then, आत्मानम् Myself, सृजामि manifest, अहम् I.

7. Whenever there is decline of righteousness, O Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

Commentary: *Dharma* is that which sustains and holds together. There is no proper equivalent for this term in the English language. That which helps a man to attain to Moksha or salvation is Dharma. That which makes a man irreligious or unrighteous is Adharma. That which elevates a man and helps him reach the goal of life and attain knowledge is Dharma; that which drags him and hurls him down in the abyss of worldliness and ignorance is Adharma.

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

परित्राणाय for the protection, साधूनाम् of the good, विनाशाय for the destruction, च and, दुष्कृताम् of the wicked, धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय for the establishment of righteousness, संभवामि (I) am born, युगे युगे in every age.

8. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.

Commentary: *Sadhunam:* The good who lead a life of righteousness, who utilise their bodies in the service of humanity, who are free from selfishness, lust and greed, and who devote their lives to divine contemplation.

Dushkritam: Evil-doers who lead a life of unrighteousness, who break the laws of the society, who are vain and are dishonest and greedy, who injure others, who take possession of the property of others by force, and who commit atrocious crimes of various sorts.

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ।।९।।

जन्म birth, कर्म action, च and, मे My, दिव्यम् divine, एवम् thus, यः who, वेत्ति knows, तत्त्वतः in true light, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, देहम् the body, पुनः again, जन्म birth, नः not, एति gets, माम् to Me, एति comes, सः he, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

9. He who thus knows, in their true light, My divine birth and action, having abandoned the body, is not born again, he comes to Me, O Arjuna.

Commentary: The Lord, though apparently born, is always beyond birth and death; though apparently active for firmly establishing righteousness, He is ever beyond all actions. He who knows this is never born again. He attains knowledge of the Self and becomes liberated while living.

The birth of the Lord is an illusion. It is Aprakrita (beyond the pale of Nature). It is divine. It is peculiar to the Lord. Though He appears in human form, His body is Chinmaya (full of consciousness, not inert matter as are human bodies composed of the five elements).

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ।।१०।।

वीतरागभयक्रोधाः freed from attachment, fear and anger, मन्मयाः absorbed in Me, माम् Me, उपाश्रिताः taking refuge in, बहवः many, ज्ञानतपसा by the fire of knowledge, पूताः purified, मद्भावम् My Being, आगताः have attained.

10. Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, many have attained to My Being.

Commentary: When one gets knowledge of the Self, attachment to sense-objects ceases. When he realises he is the constant, indestructible, eternal Self and that change is simply a quality of the body, then he becomes fearless. When he becomes desireless, when he is free from selfishness, when he beholds the Self only everywhere, how can anger arise in him?

He who takes refuge in Brahman or the Absolute becomes firmly devoted to Him. He becomes absorbed in Him (Brahmalina or Brahmanishtha). *Jnanatapas* is the fire of wisdom. Just as fire burns cotton, so also this Jnanatapas burns all the latent tendencies (Vasanas), cravings (Trishnas), mental impressions (Samskaras), sins and all actions, and purifies the aspirants. (*Cf.* II. 56; IV. 19 to 37)

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥११॥

ये who, यथा in whatever way, माम् Me, प्रपद्यन्ते approach, तान् them, तथा so, एव even, भजामि reward, अहम् I, मम My, वर्त्म path, अनुवर्तन्ते follow, मनुष्याः men, पार्थ O Partha, सर्वशः in all ways.

11. In whatever way men approach Me even so do I reward them; My path do men tread in all ways, O Arjuna.

Commentary: I reward men by bestowing on them the objects they desire in accordance with their ways and the motives with which they seek Me. If anyone worships Me with selfish motives I grant him the objects he desires. If he worships Me unselfishly for attaining knowledge of the Self, I grant him Moksha or final liberation. I am not at all partial to anyone. (*Cf.* VII. 21 and IX. 23)

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥१२॥

काङ्क्षन्तः those who long for, कर्मणाम् of actions, सिद्धिम् success, यजन्ते sacrifice, इह in this world, देवताः gods, क्षिप्रम् quickly, हि because, मानुषे in the human, लोके (in the) world, सिद्धिः success, भवति is attained, कर्मजा born of action.

12. Those who long for success in action in this world sacrifice to the gods; because success is quickly attained by men through action.

Commentary: It is very difficult to attain to the knowledge of the Self or Self-realisation. It demands perfect renunciation.

The aspirant should possess the *four means* (see page 58) and many other virtues, and practise constant and intense meditation. But worldly success can be attained quickly and easily.

The Vedic injunctions based upon castes and order are meant for the men of this world only.

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यम् the fourfold caste, मया by Me, सृष्टम् has been created, गुणकर्मविभागशः according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma, तस्य thereof, कर्तारम् the author, अपि also, माम् Me, विद्धि know, अकर्तारम् non-doer, अव्ययम् immutable.

13. The fourfold caste has been created by Me according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma; though I am the author thereof know Me as non-doer and immutable.

Commentary: The four castes (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra) are classified according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma. In a Brahmana, Sattva predominates. He possesses self-restraint, purity, serenity, straightforwardness, devotion, etc. In a Kshatriya, Rajas predominates. He possesses prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity, generosity and the nature of a ruler. In a Vaishya, Rajas predominates and Tamas is subordinate to Rajas. He does the duty of ploughing, protection of cattle and trade. In a Sudra Tamas predominates and Rajas is subordinate to Tamas. He does service to the other three castes. Human temperaments and tendencies vary according to the Gunas.

Though the Lord is the author of the caste system, yet He is not the author as He is the non-doer. He is not subject to Samsara. Really Maya does everything. Maya is the real author. Society can exist in a flourishing state if the four castes do their duties properly. Otherwise there will be chaos, rupture and fighting. (*Cf.* XVIII. 41)

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥१४॥

न not, माम् Me, कर्माणि actions, लिम्पन्ति taint, न not, मे to Me, कर्मफले in the fruit of actions, स्पृहा desire, इति thus, माम् Me, यः who, अभिजानाति knows, कर्मभिः by actions, न not, सः he, बध्यते is bound.

14. Actions do not taint Me, nor have I a desire for the fruit of actions. He who knows Me thus is not bound by actions.

Commentary: As I have neither egoism nor desire for fruits, I am not bound by actions. Worldly people think they are the agents and they perform actions. They also expect fruits for their actions. So they take birth again and again. If one works without attachment, without egoism, without expectation of fruits, he too will not be bound by actions. He will be freed from birth and death. (*Cf.* IX. 9)

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥१५॥

एवं thus, ज्ञात्वा having known, कृतम् (was) done, कर्म action, पूर्वैः by ancients, अपि also, मुमुक्षुभिः seekers after freedom, कुरु perform, कर्म action, एव even, तस्मात् therefore, त्वम् thou, पूर्वैः by ancients, पूर्वतरम् in the olden time, कृतम् done.

15. Having known this, the ancient seekers after freedom also performed action; therefore do thou also perform action, as did the ancients in days of yore.

Commentary: Knowing thus that the Self can have no desire for the fruits of actions and cannot be tainted by them, and knowing that no one can be tainted if he works without egoism, attachment and expectation of fruits, do thou perform your duty.

If your heart is impure, perform actions for its purification. If you have attained Atma-Jnana or the knowledge of the Self, work for the well-being of the world. The ancients such as Janaka and others performed actions in the days of yore. So do thou also perform action.

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥१६॥

किम् what, कर्म action, किम् what, अकर्म inaction, इति thus, कवयः wise, अपि also, अत्र in this, मोहिताः (are) deluded, तत् that, ते to thee,

कर्म action, प्रवक्ष्यामि (I) shall teach, यत् which, ज्ञात्वा having known, मोक्ष्यसे (thou) shalt be liberated, अशुभात् from evil.

16. What is action? What is inaction? As to this even the wise are confused. Therefore I shall teach thee such action (the nature of action and inaction) by knowing which thou shalt be liberated from the evil (of Samsara, the wheel of birth and death).

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ।।१७।।

कर्मणः of action, हि for, अपि also, बोद्धव्यम् should be known, बोद्धव्यम् should be known, च and, विकर्मणः of the forbidden action, अकर्मणः of inaction, च and, बोद्धव्यम् should be known, गहना deep, कर्मणः of action, गतिः the path.

17. For verily (the true nature) of action (enjoined by the scriptures) should be known, also (that) of forbidden (or unlawful) action, and of inaction; hard to understand is the nature (path) of action.

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
स बुद्धिमान् मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ।।१८।।

कर्मणि in action, अकर्म inaction, यः who, पश्येत् would see, अकर्मणि in inaction, च and, कर्म action, यः who, सः he, बुद्धिमान् wise, मनुष्येषु among men, सः he, युक्तः Yogi, कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् performer of all actions.

18. He who seeth inaction in action and action in inaction, he is wise among men; he is a Yogi and performer of all actions.

Commentary: In common parlance *action* means 'movement of the body, movement of the hands and feet', and *inaction* means 'to sit quiet'.

It is the idea of agency, the idea *I am the doer* that binds man to Samsara. If this idea vanishes, action is no action at all. It will not bind one to Samsara. This is inaction in action. If you stand as a spectator or silent witness of Nature's activities, feeling *Nature does everything*; *I am non-doer (Akarta),* if you identify yourself with the actionless Self, no matter what work or how much of it is done, action is no action at all. This is inaction in action. By such a practice and feeling, action loses its binding nature.

A man may sit quietly. He may not do anything. But if he has the idea of agency or doership, or if he thinks that he is the doer, he is ever doing action, though he is sitting quietly. This is action in inaction. The restless mind will ever be doing actions even though one sits quietly. Actions of the mind are real actions. "Nor can anyone even for one moment remain really actionless, for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities of Nature." (Chapter III. 5)

Inaction also induces the feeling of egoism. The inactive man says, 'I sit quietly; I do nothing'. Inaction, like action, is wrongly attributed to the Self.

He is the performer of all actions who knows this truth. He has attained the end of all actions, i.e., freedom or knowledge or perfection.

When a steamer moves, the trees on the shore which are motionless, appear to move in the opposite direction to a man who is in the steamer. Moving objects that are very far away appear to be stationary or motionless. Even so in the case of the Self inaction is mistaken for action and action for inaction.

The Self is actionless (*Akarta* or non-doer, *Nishkriya* or without work). The body and the senses perform action. The actions of the body and the senses are falsely and wrongly attributed by the ignorant to the actionless Self. Therefore the ignorant man thinks, '*I* act'. He thinks that the Self is the doer or the agent of the action. This is a mistake. This is ignorance.

Just as motion does not really belong to the trees on the shore which appear to move in the opposite direction to a man on board the ship, so also action does not really pertain to the Self.

This ignorance which is the cause of birth and death vanishes when you attain Self-realisation.

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ।।१९।।

यस्य whose, सर्वे all, समारम्भाः undertakings, कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः devoid of desires and purposes, ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणम् whose actions have been burnt by the fire of knowledge, तम् him, आहुः call, पण्डितम् a sage, बुधाः the wise.

19. He whose undertakings are all devoid of desires and (selfish) purposes and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of knowledge,—him the wise call a sage.

Commentary: A sage performs actions only with a view to set an example to the masses. Though he works, he does nothing as he has no selfish interests, as his actions are burnt by the fire of wisdom which consists in the realisation of inaction in action, through the knowledge of the Self or Brahma-Jnana. Brahma-Jnana is a mighty spiritual fire which consumes the results of all kinds of actions (Karmas), good and bad, and makes the enlightened sage quite free from the bonds of action. The sage who leads a life of perfect renunciation does only what is required for the bare existence of his body. (*Cf.* III. 19; IV. 10; IV. 37)

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥२०॥

त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, कर्मफलासङ्गम् attachment to the fruits of action, नित्यतृप्तः ever content, निराश्रयः depending on nothing, कर्मणि in action, अभिप्रवृत्तः engaged, अपि even, न not, एव verily, किञ्चित् anything, करोति does, सः he.

20. Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of the action, ever content, depending on nothing, he does not do anything though engaged in activity.

Commentary: The same idea of *inaction in action* is repeated here to produce a deep impression on the minds of the aspirants. He who works for the well-being of the world and he who performs actions without egoism and attachment for the fruits, to set an example to the masses, really does nothing at all though he is ever engaged in activity, as he possesses the knowledge of the Self which is beyond all activity and as he has realised his identity with It.

As Brahman the Absolute is self-contained, all the desires are gratified if one realises the Self. He is ever satisfied and does not depend on anything, just as a man who has the favour of the king does not depend on the minister or the government official for anything. (*Cf.* IV. 41)

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

निराशीः without hope, यतचित्तात्मा one with the mind and self controlled, त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः having abandoned all covetousness, शारीरम् bodily, केवलम् merely, कर्म action, कुर्वन् doing, न not, आप्नोति obtains, किल्बिषम् sin.

21. Without hope and with the mind and the self controlled, having abandoned all covetousness, doing mere bodily action, he incurs no sin.

Commentary: The liberated sage renounces all actions except what is necessary for the bare maintenance of the body. He has abandoned all possessions. He incurs no sin which will cause evil effects. For a man who thirsts for liberation (Mumukshu) even righteous activity (Dharma) is a sin as it causes bondage to Samsara. Dharma is a golden fetter for him. A golden fetter is also a fetter. A sage is liberated from both Dharma and Adharma, good and evil or virtue and vice. (*Cf.* III. 7)

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥२२॥

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टः content with what comes to him without effort, द्वन्द्वातीतः free from the pairs of opposites, विमत्सरः free from envy, समः even-minded, सिद्धौ in success, असिद्धौ in failure, च and, कृत्वा acting, अपि even, न not, निबध्यते is bound.

22. Content with what comes to him without effort, free from the pairs of opposites and envy, even-minded in success and failure, though acting, he is not bound.

Commentary: The sage is quite satisfied with what comes to him by chance. In verses IV. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 there is only a reiteration of the results of the knowledge of the Self which is beyond action. The sage who identifies himself with the 'actionless' Self is not bound as action and its cause which bind one to the round of birth and death have been burnt in the fire of the knowledge of the Self or Brahma-Jnana. Just as a seed burnt in the fire cannot germinate, so also the Karmas or actions burnt by the fire of knowledge of the Self cannot produce future birth.

Ordinary people think that the sage is also a doer of actions, an agent, active and therefore bound, when they see him doing actions. This is a mistake. From his own point of view and, in truth, he is not an agent at all. He really does no action at all. He feels and says, "I do nothing at all. Nature does or the three qualities of Nature do everything."

He is not affected by heat and cold, pleasure and pain, success and failure, as he always has a balanced state of mind. He is not attached even to the things which are necessary for the bare maintenance of his body. He experiences neither pleasure nor pain, whether or not he obtains food and the other things which are required for the maintenance of his body. The reason is that he is resting in his essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute (Satchidananda-Svarupa); he is swimming in the ocean of bliss. So he does not care for his body and its needs.

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

गतसङ्गस्य one who is devoid of attachment, मुक्तस्य of the liberated, ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः whose mind is established in knowledge, यज्ञाय for sacrifice, आचरतः acting, कर्म action, समग्रम् whole, प्रविलीयते is dissolved.

23. To one who is devoid of attachment, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge, who works for the sake of sacrifice (for the sake of God), the whole action is dissolved.

Commentary: One who is free from attachment, who is liberated from the bonds of Karma, whose mind is centred and rooted in wisdom, who performs actions for the sake of sacrifice, in order to please the Lord—all his actions with their results melt away. His actions are reduced to nothing. They are, in fact, no actions at all.

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ।।२४।।

ब्रह्म Brahman, अर्पणम् the oblation, ब्रह्म Brahman, हविः the clarified butter, ब्रह्माग्नौ in the fire of Brahman, ब्रह्मणा by Brahman, हुतम् is offered, ब्रह्म Brahman, एव only, तेन by him, गन्तव्यम् shall be reached, ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना by the man who is absorbed in action which is Brahman.

24. Brahman is the oblation; Brahman is the melted butter (ghee); by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman; Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.

Commentary: This is Jnana-Yajna or wisdom-sacrifice wherein the idea of Brahman is substituted for the ideas of the instrument and other accessories of action, the idea of action itself and of its results. By entertaining such an idea the whole action melts away, as stated in the previous verse (No. 23).

When one attains to the knowledge of the Self or Self-realisation his whole life becomes a wisdom-sacrifice in which the oblation, the melted butter or the offering, the performer of the sacrifice, the action and the goal are all Brahman. He who meditates thus wholly upon Brahman shall verily attain to Brahman.

The sage who has the knowledge of the Self knows that the oblation, the fire, the instrument by which the melted butter is poured into the fire and himself have no existence apart from that of Brahman. He who has realised through direct cognition (Anubhava) that all is Brahman, does no action even if he performs actions. (*Cf.* III. 15)

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ।।२५।।

दैवम् pertaining to Devas, एव only, अपरे some, यज्ञम् sacrifice, योगिनः Yogis, पर्युपासते perform, ब्रह्माग्नौ in the fire of Brahman, अपरे

others, यज्ञम् sacrifice, यज्ञेन by sacrifice, एव verily, उपजुह्वति offer as sacrifice.

25. Some Yogis perform sacrifice to the gods alone; while others (who have realised the Self) offer the self as sacrifice by the Self in the fire of Brahman alone.

Commentary: Some Yogis who are devoted to Karma Yoga perform sacrificial rites to the shining ones or Devas (gods). The second Yajna is Jnana-Yajna or the wisdom sacrifice performed by those who are devoted to Jnana Yoga. The oblation in this sacrifice is the Self. *Yajna* here means the Self. The Upadhis or the limiting adjuncts such as the physical body, the mind, the intellect, etc., which are superimposed on Brahman through ignorance are sublated and the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul or Brahman is realised. To sacrifice the self in Brahman is to know through direct cognition (Aparoksha Anubhuti) that the individual soul is identical with Brahman. This is the highest Yajna. Those who are established in Brahman, those who have realised their oneness with the Supreme Soul or Paramatma perform this kind of sacrifice. This is superior to all other sacrifices.

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥२६॥

श्रोत्रादीनि इन्द्रियाणि organ of hearing and other senses, अन्ये others, संयमाग्निषु in the fire of restraint, जुह्वति sacrifice, शब्दादीन् विषयान् sense-objects such as sound, etc., अन्ये others, इन्द्रियाग्निषु in the fire of the senses, जुह्वति sacrifice.

26. Some again offer the organ of hearing and other senses as sacrifice in the fire of restraint; others offer sound and other objects of the senses as sacrifice in the fire of the senses.

Commentary: Some Yogis are constantly engaged in restraining the senses. They gather their senses under the guidance of the Self and do not allow them to come in contact with the sensual objects. This is also an act of sacrifice. Others direct their senses only to the pure and unforbidden objects of the senses. This is also a kind of sacrifice.

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।
आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥२७॥

सर्वाणि all, इन्द्रियकर्माणि functions of the senses, प्राणकर्माणि functions of the breath (vital energy), च and, अपरे other, आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ in the fire of the Yoga of self-restraint, जुह्वति sacrifice, ज्ञानदीपिते kindled by knowledge.

27. Others again sacrifice all the functions of the senses and those of the breath (vital energy or Prana) in the fire of the Yoga of self-restraint kindled by knowledge.

Commentary: Just as a lamp is kindled by oil, so also the fire of the Yoga of self-control is kindled by knowledge. When the Yogi concentrates or fixes his mind on Brahman or the Self, the senses and the breath cease to function. The senses and the breath are absorbed into their cause.

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥२८॥

द्रव्ययज्ञाः those who offer wealth as sacrifice, तपोयज्ञाः those who offer austerity as sacrifice, योगयज्ञाः those who offer Yoga as sacrifice, तथा thus, अपरे others, स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाः those who offer study and knowledge as sacrifice, च and, यतयः ascetics or anchorites (persons of self-restraint), संशितव्रताः persons of rigid vows.

28. Others again offer wealth, austerity and Yoga as sacrifice, while the ascetics of self-restraint and rigid vows offer study of scriptures and knowledge as sacrifice.

Commentary: Some do sacrifice by distributing their wealth to the deserving as charity; some offer their Tapas (austerities) as sacrifice; some practise the eight limbs of Raja Yoga, viz., Yama (the five great vows), Niyama (the canons of conduct), Asana (posture), Pranayama (restraint of breath), Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (superconscious state), and offer this Yoga as a sacrifice; some study the scriptures and offer it as sacrifice.

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथाऽपरे ।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥२९॥

अपाने in the outgoing breath, जुह्वति sacrifice, प्राणम् incoming breath, प्राणे in the incoming breath, अपानम् outgoing breath, तथा thus, अपरे others, प्राणापानगती courses of the outgoing and incoming breaths, रुद्ध्वा restraining, प्राणायामपरायणाः solely absorbed in the restraint of breath.

29. Others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming, and the incoming in the outgoing, restraining the course of the outgoing and the incoming breaths, solely absorbed in the restraint of the breath.

Commentary: Some Yogis practise Puraka (inhalation), some Yogis practise Rechaka (exhalation), and some Yogis practise Kumbhaka (retention of breath).

The five sub-Pranas and the other Pranas are merged in the chief Prana (Mukhya-Prana) by the practice of Pranayama. When the Prana is controlled, the mind also stops its wanderings and becomes steady; the senses are also thinned out and merged in the Prana. It is through the vibration of Prana that the activities of the mind and the senses are kept up. If the Prana is controlled, the mind, the intellect and the senses cease to function.

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥३०॥

अपरे other persons, नियताहाराः of regulated food, प्राणान् life-breaths, प्राणेषु in the life-breaths, जुह्वति sacrifice, सर्वे all, अपि also, एते these, यज्ञविदः knowers of sacrifice, यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः whose sins are destroyed by sacrifice.

30. Others who regulate their diet offer life-breaths in life-breaths. All these are knowers of sacrifice, whose sins are destroyed by sacrifice.

Commentary: *Niyataharah* means persons of regulated or limited food. They take moderate food. By rigid dieting they control the passions and appetites by weakening the functions of the organs of action.

Yogis pour the life-breaths as sacrifice in the controlled life-breath. The former becomes merged in the latter.

Performance of the above sacrifice leads to the purification of the mind and destruction of sins.

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ।।३१।।

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजः eaters of the nectar—the remnants of the sacrifice, यान्ति go, ब्रह्म Brahman, सनातनम् eternal, न not, अयम् this, लोकः world, अस्ति is, अयज्ञस्य of the non-sacrificer, कुतः how, अन्यः other, कुरुसत्तम O best of the Kurus.

31. Those who eat the remnants of the sacrifice, which are like nectar, go to the eternal Brahman. This world is not for the man who does not perform sacrifice; how then can he have the other, O Arjuna?

Commentary: They go to the eternal Brahman in course of time after attaining the knowledge of the Self through purification of the mind by performing the above sacrifices. He who does not perform any of these is not fit even for this miserable world. How then can he hope to get a better world than this? (*Cf.* III. 13)

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ।।३२।।

एवम् thus, बहुविधाः manifold, यज्ञाः sacrifices, वितताः are spread, ब्रह्मणः of Brahman (or of the Veda), मुखे in the face, कर्मजान् born of action, विद्धि know (thou), तान् them, सर्वान् all, एवम् thus, ज्ञात्वा having known, विमोक्ष्यसे thou shalt be liberated.

32. Thus, manifold sacrifices are spread out before Brahman (literally at the mouth or face of Brahman). Know them all as born of action and thus knowing, thou shalt be liberated.

Commentary: The word *Brahmanah* has also been interpreted to mean 'In the Vedas'.

Various kinds of sacrifices are spread out at the mouth of Brahman, i.e., they are known from the Vedas. Know that they are born of action, because the Self is beyond action. If you realise that "these actions do not concern me, they are not my action, and I am actionless", you will surely be liberated from the bondage of Samsara by this right knowledge. (*Cf.* IX. 27; XIII. 15)

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ।।३३।।

श्रेयान् superior, द्रव्यमयात् with objects, यज्ञात् than sacrifice, ज्ञानयज्ञः knowledge-sacrifice, परन्तप O Parantapa, सर्वम् all, कर्म action, अखिलम् in its entirety, पार्थ O Partha, ज्ञाने in knowledge, परिसमाप्यते is culminated.

33. Superior is wisdom-sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects, O Parantapa (scorcher of the foes). All actions in their entirety, O Arjuna, culminate in knowledge.

Commentary: Sacrifices with material objects cause material effects and bring the sacrificer to this world for the enjoyment of the fruits, while wisdom-sacrifice leads to Moksha. Therefore wisdom-sacrifice is superior to the sacrifice performed with material objects. Just as rivers join the ocean, so do all actions join knowledge, i.e., they culminate in knowledge. All actions purify the heart and lead to the dawn of knowledge of the Self.

All actions that are performed as offerings unto the Lord with their fruits are contained in the knowledge of Brahman. (*Cf.* IX. 15; X. 25; XVIII. 70)

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ।।३४।।

तत् That, विद्धि know, प्रणिपातेन by long prostration, परिप्रश्नेन by question, सेवया by service, उपदेक्ष्यन्ति will instruct, ते to thee, ज्ञानम् knowledge, ज्ञानिनः the wise, तत्त्वदर्शिनः those who have realised the Truth.

34. Know That by long prostration, by question and by service; the wise who have realised the Truth will instruct thee in (that) knowledge.

Commentary: Go to the teachers (those who are well versed in the scriptures dealing with Brahman or Brahmasrotris, and who are established in Brahman or Brahmanishthas). Prostrate yourself before them with profound humility and perfect devotion. Ask them questions, "O venerable Guru! What is the cause of bondage? How can I get liberation? What is the nature of ignorance? What is the nature of knowledge? What is the Antaranga-Sadhana (inward spiritual practice) for attaining Self-realisation?" Serve the Guru whole-heartedly. A teacher who is versed in the scriptures (Sastras) but who has no direct Self-realisation will not be able to help you in the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. He who has knowledge of the scriptures and who is also established in Brahman will be able to instruct thee in that knowledge and help thee in the attainment of Self-realisation. Mere prostrations alone will not do. They may be tinged with hypocrisy. You must have perfect faith in your Guru and his teaching. You must serve him whole-heartedly with great devotion. Now hypocrisy is not possible.

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ।।३५।।

यत् which, ज्ञात्वा having known, न not, पुनः again, मोहम् delusion, एवम् thus, यास्यसि will get, पाण्डव O Pandava, येन by this, भूतानि beings, अशेषेण all, द्रक्ष्यसि (thou) shalt see, आत्मनि in (thy) Self, अथो also, मयि in Me.

35. Knowing *that* thou shalt not, O Arjuna, again get deluded like this; and by that thou shalt see all beings in thy Self and also in Me.

Commentary: *That,* the knowledge of the Self mentioned in the previous verse, that is to be learnt from the Brahmanishtha Guru through prostration, questioning and service. When you acquire this knowledge you will not be again subject to confusion or error. You will behold that underlying basic unity. You will behold or directly cognise through internal experience or intuition that all beings from the Creator down to a blade of grass exist in your own Self and also in Me. (*Cf.* IX. 15; XVIII. 20)

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि ।।३६।।

अपि even, चेत् if, असि (thou) art, पापेभ्यः than sinners, सर्वेभ्यः (than) all, पापकृत्तमः most sinful, सर्वम् all, ज्ञानप्लवेन by the raft of knowledge, एव alone, वृजिनम् sin, सन्तरिष्यसि (thou) shalt cross.

36. Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet thou shalt verily cross all sins by the raft of knowledge.

Commentary: You can cross the ocean of sin with the boat of the knowledge of the Self. (*Cf.* IX. 30)

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ।।३७।।

यथा as, एधांसि fuel, समिद्धः blazing, अग्निः fire, भस्मसात्कुरुते reduces to ashes, अर्जुन O Arjuna, ज्ञानाग्निः fire of knowledge, सर्वकर्माणि all actions, भस्मसात्कुरुते reduces to ashes, तथा so.

37. As the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes.

Commentary: Just as the seeds that are roasted cannot germinate, so also the actions that are burnt by the fire of knowledge cannot bear fruits, i.e., cannot bring man to this world again for the enjoyment of the fruits of his actions. This is reducing actions to ashes. The actions lose their potency as they are burnt by the fire of knowledge. When the knowledge of the Self dawns, all actions with their results are burnt by the fire of that knowledge just as fuel is burnt by the fire. When there is no agency-mentality (the idea "I do this"), when there is no desire for the fruits, action is no action at all. It has lost its potency. The fire of knowledge can burn all actions except the Prarabdha Karma, or the result of the past action which has brought this body into existence and which has thus already begun to bear fruits or produce effects.

According to some philosophers even the Prarabdha Karma is destroyed by the fire of knowledge. Sri Sankara says in his *Aparokshanubhuti:*

"In the passage 'his actions are destroyed when the Supreme is realised' the Veda expressly speaks of actions (Karmas) in the plural, in order to signify the destruction of even the Prarabdha."

There are three kinds of Karmas or reaction to or fructification of past actions: (1) Prarabdha, so much of the past actions as has given rise to the present birth, (2) Sanchita, the balance of the past actions that will give rise to future births—the storehouse of accumulated actions, and (3) Agami or Kriyamana, acts being done in the present life. If by the knowledge of the Self only the Sanchita and Agami were destroyed and not Prarabdha, the dual number would have been used and not the plural. (Sanskrit grammar has singular, dual and plural numbers). (*Cf.* IV. 10-19)

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥३८॥

न not, हि verily, ज्ञानेन to wisdom, सदृशम् like, पवित्रम् pure, इह here (in this world), विद्यते is, तत् that, स्वयम् oneself, योगसंसिद्धः perfected in Yoga, कालेन in time, आत्मनि in the Self, विन्दति finds.

38. Verily, there is no purifier in this world like knowledge. He who is perfected in Yoga finds it in the Self in time.

Commentary: There exists no purifier equal to knowledge of the Self. He who has attained perfection by the constant practice of Karma Yoga and Dhyana Yoga (the Yoga of meditation) will, after a time, find the knowledge of the Self in himself.

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

श्रद्धावान् the man of faith, लभते obtains, ज्ञानम् knowledge, तत्परः devoted, संयतेन्द्रियः who has subdued the senses, ज्ञानम् knowledge, लब्ध्वा having obtained, पराम् supreme, शान्तिम् to peace, अचिरेण at once, अधिगच्छति attains.

39. The man who is full of faith, who is devoted to it, and who has subdued the senses obtains (this) knowledge; and having obtained the knowledge he attains at once to the supreme peace.

Commentary: He who is full of faith, who constantly serves his Guru and hears his teachings, who has subdued the senses surely gets the knowledge and quickly attains the supreme peace or salvation (Moksha). All the above three qualifications are indispensable for an aspirant if he wants to attain to the supreme peace of the Eternal quickly. One qualification alone will not suffice. (*Cf.* X. 10, 11)

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥४०॥

अज्ञः the ignorant, च and, अश्रद्दधानः the faithless, च and, संशयात्मा the doubting self, विनश्यति goes to destruction, न not, अयम् this, लोकः world, अस्ति is, न not, परः the next, न not, सुखम् happiness, संशयात्मनः for the doubting self.

40. The ignorant, the faithless, the doubting self goes to destruction; there is neither this world nor the other, nor happiness for the doubting.

Commentary: *The ignorant*: one who has no knowledge of the Self. *The man without faith*: one who has no faith in his own self, in the scriptures and the teachings of his Guru.

A man of doubting mind is the most sinful of all. His condition is very deplorable. He is full of doubts as regards the next world. He does not rejoice in this world also, as he is very suspicious. He has no happiness.

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥४१॥

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणम् one who has renounced actions by Yoga, ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् one whose doubts are rent asunder by knowledge, आत्मवन्तम् possessing the self, न not, कर्माणि actions, निबध्नन्ति bind, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya.

41. He who has renounced actions by Yoga, whose doubts are rent asunder by knowledge, and who is self-possessed—actions do not bind him, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Sri Madhusudana Sarasvati explains *Atmavantam* as 'always watchful'.

He who has attained to Self-realisation renounces all actions by means of Yoga or the knowledge of Brahman. As he is established in the knowledge of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul, all his doubts are cut asunder. Actions do not bind him as they are burnt in the fire of wisdom and as he is always watchful over himself. (*Cf.* II. 48; III. 9; IV. 20)

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

तस्मात् therefore, अज्ञानसंभूतम् born out of ignorance, हृत्स्थम् residing in the heart, ज्ञानासिना by the sword of knowledge, आत्मनः of the Self, छित्त्वा having cut, एनम् this, संशयम् doubt, योगम् Yoga, आतिष्ठ take refuge, उत्तिष्ठ arise, भारत O Bharata.

42. Therefore with the sword of the knowledge (of the Self) cut asunder the doubt of the self born of ignorance, residing in thy heart, and take refuge in Yoga. Arise, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Doubt causes a great deal of mental torment. It is most sinful. It is born of ignorance. Kill it ruthlessly with the knowledge of the Self. Now stand up and fight, O Arjuna.

(This chapter is known by the names Jnana Yoga, Abhyasa Yoga and Jnanakarmasannyasa Yoga also.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
ज्ञानविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fourth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Division of Wisdom.

अथ पञ्चमोऽध्यायः

FIFTH DISCOURSE

कर्मसंन्यासयोगः

THE YOGA OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥१॥

संन्यासम् renunciation, कर्मणाम् of actions, कृष्ण O Krishna, पुनः again, योगम् Yoga, च and, शंससि (Thou) praisest, यत् which, श्रेयः better, एतयोः of these two, एकम् one, तत् that, मे to me, ब्रूहि tell, सुनिश्चितम् conclusively.

Arjuna said:

1. Renunciation of actions, O Krishna, Thou praisest, and again Yoga. Tell me conclusively that which is the better of the two.

Commentary: Thou teachest renunciation of actions and also their performance. This has confused me. Tell decisively now which is better. It is not possible for a man to resort to both of them at the same time. *Yoga* here means Karma Yoga. (*Cf.* III. 2)

श्री भगवानुवाच

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥२॥

संन्यासः renunciation, कर्मयोगः Yoga of action, च and, निःश्रेयसकरौ leading to the highest bliss, उभौ both, तयोः of these two, तु but, कर्मसंन्यासात् than renunciation of action, कर्मयोगः Yoga of action, विशिष्यते is superior.

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Renunciation and the Yoga of action both lead to the highest bliss; but of the two, the Yoga of action is superior to the renunciation of action.

Commentary: Sannyasa (renunciation of action) and Karma Yoga (performance of action) both lead to Moksha or liberation or the highest bliss. Though both lead to Moksha, yet of the two means of attaining to Moksha, Karma Yoga is better than mere Karma Sannyasa (renunciation of action) without the knowledge of the Self.

But renunciation of actions with the knowledge of the Self is decidedly superior to Karma Yoga.

Moreover, Karma Yoga is easy and is therefore suitable to all. (*Cf.* III. 3; V. 5; VI. 46)

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥

ज्ञेयः should be known, सः he, नित्यसंन्यासी perpetual ascetic, यः who, न not, द्वेष्टि hates, न not, काङ्क्षति desires, निर्द्वन्द्वः one free from the pairs of opposites, हि verily, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, सुखम् easily, बन्धात् from bondage, प्रमुच्यते is set free.

3. He should be known as a perpetual Sannyasi who neither hates nor desires; for, free from the pairs of opposites, O mighty-armed Arjuna, he is easily set free from bondage.

Commentary: A man does not become a Sannyasi by merely giving up actions because of laziness or ignorance or some family quarrel or calamity or unemployment. A true Sannyasi is not a hypocritical coward.

The Karma Yogi who neither hates pain and the objects which give him pain, nor desires pleasure and the objects that give him pleasure, who has neither attachment nor aversion to any sense-object and who has risen above the pairs of heat and cold, joy and sorrow, success and failure, victory and defeat, gain and loss, praise and censure, honour and dishonour, should be known as a perpetual Sannyasi though he is ever engaged in action.

One need not have taken Sannyasa formally but if he has the above mental attitude, he is a perpetual Sannyasi. Mere ochre-coloured robe cannot make one a Sannyasi. What is wanted is a pure heart with true renunciation of egoism and desires. Physical renunciation of objects is no renunciation at all. (*Cf.* VI. 1)

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ।।४।।

सांख्ययोगौ Sankhya (knowledge) and Yoga (Yoga of action or performance of action), पृथक् distinct, बालाः children, प्रवदन्ति speak, न not, पण्डिताः the wise, एकम् one, अपि even, आस्थितः established in, सम्यक् truly, उभयोः of both, विन्दते obtains, फलम् fruit.

4. Children, not the wise, speak of knowledge and the Yoga of action or the performance of action as though they are distinct and different; he who is truly established in one obtains the fruits of both.

Commentary: *Children*: the ignorant people who have no knowledge of the Self, and who have only a theoretical knowledge of the scriptures.

Children or ignorant people only say that knowledge and the performance of action are different and produce distinct and opposite results. But the wise who have the knowledge of the Self say that they produce the same result only, viz., Moksha or liberation. He who is duly established in one, he who truly lives in one, Sankhya or Yoga, obtains the fruits of both. Therefore there is no diversity in the result or the fruit. This is the gist of this verse. (*Cf.* VI. 2).

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ।।५।।

यत् which, सांख्यैः by the Sankhyas, प्राप्यते is reached, स्थानम् place, तत् that, योगैः by the Yogis (Karma Yogis), अपि also, गम्यते is reached, एकम् one, सांख्यम् the Sankhya (knowledge), च and, योगम् Yoga (performance of action), च and, यः who, पश्यति sees, सः he, पश्यति sees.

5. That place which is reached by the Sankhyas or the Jnanis is reached by the Yogis (Karma Yogis). He sees, who sees knowledge and the performance of action (Karma Yoga) as one.

Commentary: Those who have renounced the world and are treading the path of Jnana Yoga or Vedanta are the Sankhyas. Through Sravana (hearing of the Srutis or Vedantic texts), Manana (reflection on what is heard) and Nididhyasana (constant and profound meditation) they attain to Moksha or Kaivalya directly. Karma Yogis who do selfless service, who perform their duties without expectation of the fruits and who dedicate their actions as offerings unto the Lord also reach the same state as is attained by Sankhyas indirectly through the purification of their heart and renunciation and the consequent dawn of the knowledge of the Self. That man who sees that Sankhya and Yoga are one, as leading to the same result, sees rightly. (*Cf.* XIII. 24, 25; V. 2)

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ।।६।।

संन्यासः renunciation, तु but, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, दुःखम् hard, आप्तुम् to attain, अयोगतः without Yoga, योगयुक्तः Yoga-harmonised, मुनिः Muni, ब्रह्म to Brahman, नचिरेण quickly, अधिगच्छति goes.

6. But renunciation, O mighty-armed Arjuna, is hard to attain without Yoga; the Yoga-harmonised sage quickly goes to Brahman.

Commentary: *Muni* is one who does Manana (meditation or reflection). Yoga is performance of action without selfish motive as an offering unto the Lord.

Brahman here signifies renunciation or Sannyasa because renunciation consists in the knowledge of the Self. A Muni, the sage of meditation, the Yoga-harmonised, i.e., purified by the performance of action, quickly attains Brahman, the true renunciation which is devotion to the knowledge of the Self. Therefore Karma Yoga is better. It is easy for a beginner. It prepares him for the higher Yoga by purifying his mind.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ।।७।।

योगयुक्तः devoted to the path of action, विशुद्धात्मा a man of purified mind, विजितात्मा one who has conquered the self, जितेन्द्रियः one who has subdued his senses, सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा one who realises his Self as the Self in all beings, कुर्वन् acting, अपि even, न not, लिप्यते is tainted.

7. He who is devoted to the path of action, whose mind is quite pure, who has conquered the self, who has subdued his senses and who realises his Self as the Self in all beings, though acting, is not tainted.

Commentary: He who is harmonised by Yoga, i.e., he who has purified his mind by devotion to the performance of action, who has conquered the body and who has subjugated the senses, whose Self is the Self of all beings, he will not be bound by actions although he performs actions for the well-being or protection of the masses in order to set an example to them. (*Cf.* XVIII. 17)

नैव किंचित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।
पश्यन् शृण्वन्स्पृशञ्जिघ्रन्नश्नन्गच्छन्स्वपन् श्वसन् ।।८।।

न not, एव even, किंचित् anything, करोमि I do, इति thus, युक्तः centred (in the Self), मन्येत should think, तत्त्ववित् the knower of Truth, पश्यन् seeing, शृण्वन् hearing, स्पृशन् touching, जिघ्रन् smelling, अश्नन् eating, गच्छन् going, स्वपन् sleeping, श्वसन् breathing.

8. "I do nothing at all," thus would the harmonised knower of Truth think—seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing,

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ।।९।।

प्रलपन् speaking, विसृजन् letting go, गृह्णन् seizing, उन्मिषन् opening (the eyes), निमिषन् closing (the eyes), अपि also, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, इन्द्रियार्थेषु amongst the sense-objects, वर्तन्ते move, इति thus, धारयन् being convinced.

9. Speaking, letting go, seizing, opening and closing the eyes—convinced that the senses move among the sense-objects,

Commentary: The liberated sage or a Jnani always remains as a witness of the activities of the senses as he identifies himself with the Self or Brahman. He thinks and says, "I do not see; the eyes perceive. I do not hear; the ears hear. I do not smell, the nose smells, etc." He beholds inaction in action as he has burnt his actions in the fire of wisdom. (*Cf.* XIV. 19-23)

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥१०॥

ब्रह्मणि in Brahman, आधाय having placed, कर्माणि actions, सङ्गम् attachment, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, करोति acts, यः who, लिप्यते is tainted, न not, सः he, पापेन by sin, पद्मपत्रम् lotus-leaf, इव like, अम्भसा by water.

10. He who does actions, offering them to Brahman, and abandoning attachment, is not tainted by sin, just as a lotus-leaf is not tainted by water.

Commentary: Chapter IV verses 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 37, 41; Chapter V verses 10, 11 and 12 all convey the one idea that the Yogi who does actions without egoism and attachment to results or fruits of the actions, which he regards as offerings unto the Lord, is not tainted by the actions (Karma). He has no attachment even for Moksha. He sees inaction in action. All his actions are burnt in the fire of wisdom. He escapes from the wheel of Samsara. He is freed from the round of births and deaths. He gets purity of heart and through purity of heart attains to the knowledge of the Self. Through the knowledge of the Self he is liberated. This is the gist of the above ten verses. (*Cf.* III. 30)

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्मशुद्धये ॥११॥

कायेन by the body, मनसा by the mind, बुद्ध्या by the intellect, केवलैः only, इन्द्रियैः by the senses, अपि also, योगिनः Yogis, कर्म action, कुर्वन्ति perform, सङ्गम् attachment, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, आत्मशुद्धये for the purification of the self.

11. Yogis, having abandoned attachment, perform actions only by the body, mind, intellect and even by the senses, for the purification of the self.

Commentary: *Yogis* here means 'Karma Yogis' who are devoted to the path of action, who are free from egoism and selfishness, who work for the purification of their hearts without the least attachment to the fruits or results of their actions, and who dedicate all actions to the Lord as their offerings.

Kevalam: *'only by'* (free from egoism and selfishness) applies to the body, mind, intellect and the senses.

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥१२॥

युक्तः the united one (the well poised), कर्मफलम् fruit of action, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, शान्तिम् peace, आप्नोति attains, नैष्ठिकीम् final, अयुक्तः the non-united one, कामकारेण impelled by desire, फले in the fruit (of action), सक्तः attached, निबध्यते is bound.

12. The united one (the well poised or the harmonised) having abandoned the fruit of action attains to the eternal peace: the non-united only (the unsteady or the unbalanced) impelled by desire, attached to the fruit, is bound.

Commentary: *Santim naishthikim* is interpreted as 'peace born of devotion or steadfastness'. The harmonious man who does actions for the sake of the Lord without expectation of the fruit and who says, "I do actions for my Lord only, not for my personal gain or profit," attains to the peace born of devotion, through the following four stages, viz., purity of mind, the attainment of knowledge, renunciation of actions, and steadiness in wisdom. But the unbalanced or the unharmonised man who is led by desire and who is attached to the fruits of the actions and who says, "I have done such and such an action; I will get such and such a fruit," is firmly bound.

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥१३॥

सर्वकर्माणि all actions, मनसा by the mind, संन्यस्य having renounced, आस्ते rests, सुखम् happily, वशी the self-controlled, नवद्वारे in the nine-gated, पुरे in the city, देही the embodied, न not, एव even, कुर्वन् acting, न not, कारयन् causing to act.

13. Mentally renouncing all actions and self-controlled, the embodied one rests happily in the nine-gated city, neither acting nor causing others (body and senses) to act.

Commentary: *All actions:—*

(1) Nitya Karmas: These are obligatory duties. Their performance does not produce any merit; but their non-performance produces demerit. Sandhyavandana, etc., belong to this category.

(2) Naimittika Karmas: These Karmas are performed on the occurrence of some special events such as the birth of a son, eclipse, etc.

(3) Kamya Karmas: These are optional. They are intended for the attainment of some special ends (for getting rain, son, etc.)

(4) Nishiddha Karmas: These are forbidden actions such as theft, drinking liquor, etc.

(5) Prayaschitta Karmas: Actions performed to neutralise the effects of evil actions or sins.

The man who has controlled the senses renounces all actions by discrimination, by seeing inaction in action and rests happily in this body of nine openings (the nine-gated city), because he is free from cares, worries, anxieties and fear and his mind is quite calm and he enjoys the supreme peace of the Eternal. In this nine-gated city the Self is the king. The senses, the mind, the subconscious mind, and the intellect are the inhabitants or subjects.

The ignorant worldly man says, "I am resting in the easy-chair." The man of wisdom who has realised that the Self is distinct from the body which is a product of the five elements, says, "I am resting in this body." (*Cf.* XVIII. 17, 50)

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ।।१४।।

न not, कर्तृत्वम् agency, न not, कर्माणि actions, लोकस्य for this world, सृजति creates, प्रभुः the Lord, न not, कर्मफलसंयोगम् union with the fruits of actions, स्वभावः nature, तु but, प्रवर्तते leads to action.

14. Neither agency nor actions does the Lord create for the world, nor union with the fruits of actions. But it is Nature that acts.

Commentary: The Lord does not create agency or doership. He does not press anyone to do actions. He never tells anyone, "Do this or do that." He does not bring about the union with the fruit of actions. It is Prakriti or Nature that does everything. (*Cf.* III. 33)

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ।।१५।।

न not, आदत्ते takes, कस्यचित् of anyone, पापम् demerit, न not, च and, एव even, सुकृतम् merit, विभुः the Lord, अज्ञानेन by ignorance, आवृतम् enveloped, ज्ञानम् knowledge, तेन by that, मुह्यन्ति are deluded, जन्तवः beings.

15. The Lord takes neither the demerit nor even the merit of any; knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, thereby beings are deluded.

Commentary: Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance. Consequently man is deluded. He thinks, "I act. I enjoy. I have done such and such a meritorious act. I will get such and such a fruit. I will enjoy in heaven. I will get a birth in a rich family."

Of anyone: even of His devotees.

Man is bound when he identifies himself with Nature and its effects—body, mind, Prana or the life-force, and senses. He attains freedom or Moksha when he identifies himself with the immortal, 'actionless' Self that dwells within his heart.

When 'I' does not act how can God accept good or evil deeds? (*Cf.* V. 29)

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥१६॥

ज्ञानेन by wisdom, तु but, तत् that, अज्ञानम् ignorance, येषाम् whose, नाशितम् is destroyed, आत्मनः of the Self, तेषाम् their, आदित्यवत् like the sun, ज्ञानम् knowledge, प्रकाशयति reveals, तत्परम् that Highest.

16. But to those whose ignorance is destroyed by the knowledge of the Self, like the sun, knowledge reveals the Supreme (Brahman).

Commentary: When ignorance, the root cause of human sufferings, is annihilated by the knowledge of the Self, this knowledge illuminates the Supreme Brahman or that highest immortal Being, just as the sun illumines all the objects of this gross, physical universe.

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥१७॥

तद्बुद्धयः intellect absorbed in That, तदात्मानः their self being That, तन्निष्ठाः established in That, तत्परायणाः with That for their supreme goal, गच्छन्ति go, अपुनरावृत्तिम् not again returning, ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः those whose sins have been dispelled by knowledge.

17. Their intellect absorbed in That, their self being That, established in That, with That for their supreme goal, they go whence there is no return, their sins dispelled by knowledge.

Commentary: They fix their intellects on Brahman or the Supreme Self. They feel and realise that Brahman is their self. By constant and protracted meditation, they get established in Brahman. The whole world of names and forms vanishes for them. They live in Brahman alone. They have Brahman alone as their supreme goal or sole refuge. They rejoice in the Self alone. They are satisfied in the Self alone. They are contented in the Self alone. Such men never come back to this Samsara, as their sins are dispelled by knowledge (Brahma-Jnana). (*Cf.* IX. 34)

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥१८॥

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने upon one endowed with learning and humility, ब्राह्मणे on a Brahmana, गवि on a cow, हस्तिनि on an elephant, शुनि on a dog, च and, एव even, श्वपाके on an outcaste, च and, पण्डिताः sages, समदर्शिनः equal seeing.

18. Sages look with an equal eye on a Brahmana endowed with learning and humility, on a cow, on an elephant, and even on a dog and an outcaste.

Commentary: The liberated sage or Jivanmukta or a Brahmana has equal vision as he beholds the Self only everywhere. This magnificent vision of a Jnani is beyond description. Atman or Brahman is not at all affected by the Upadhis or limiting adjuncts as He is extremely subtle, pure, formless and attributeless. The sun's reflection falls on the river Ganga, on the ocean or on a dirty stream. The sun is not at all affected in any way. This makes no difference to the sun. So is the case with the Supreme Self. The Upadhis (limiting adjuncts) cannot affect Him. Just as the ether is not affected by the limiting adjuncts, viz., a pot, the walls of a room, cloud, etc., so also the Self is not affected by the Upadhis.

The Brahmana is Sattvic. The cow is Rajasic. The elephant, the dog and the outcaste are Tamasic. The sage sees in all of them the one homogeneous immortal Self Who is not affected by the three Gunas and their tendencies. (*Cf.* VI. 8, 32; XIV. 24)

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ।।१९।।

इह here, एव even, तैः by them, जितः is conquered, सर्गः rebirth or creation, येषाम् of whom, साम्ये in equality, स्थितम् established, मनः mind, निर्दोषम् spotless, हि indeed, समम् equal, ब्रह्म Brahman, तस्मात् therefore, ब्रह्मणि in Brahman, ते they, स्थिताः are established.

19. Even here (in this world) birth (everything) is overcome by those whose minds rest in equality; Brahman is spotless indeed and equal; therefore they are established in Brahman.

Commentary: When the mind gets rooted in equanimity or evenness or equality, when it is always in a balanced state, one conquers birth and death. Bondage is annihilated and freedom is attained by him. When the mind is in a perfectly balanced state he overcomes Brahman Himself, i.e., realises Brahman.

Brahman is ever pure and attributeless and so He is not affected even though He dwells in an outcaste, dog, etc. So He is spotless. He is homogeneous and one, as He dwells equally in all beings.

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसम्मूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥२०॥

न not, प्रहृष्येत् should rejoice, प्रियम् the pleasant, प्राप्य having obtained, न not, उद्विजेत् should be troubled, प्राप्य having obtained, च and, अप्रियम् the unpleasant, स्थिरबुद्धिः one with steady intellect, असम्मूढः undeluded, ब्रह्मवित् knower of Brahman, ब्रह्मणि in Brahman, स्थितः established.

20. Resting in Brahman, with steady intellect and undeluded, the knower of Brahman neither rejoiceth on obtaining what is pleasant nor grieveth on obtaining what is unpleasant.

Commentary: This is the state of a Jivanmukta or a liberated sage or a Brahmana who identifies himself with the Self or Atman. He always has a balanced mind. He is never deluded. He has abandoned all actions as he rests in Brahman. He who has an unbalanced mind, who identifies himself with the body and mind feels pleasure and pain, exhilaration of spirits when he gets a pleasant object and grief when he obtains an unpleasant object. (*Cf.* VI. 21, 27, 28; XIII. 12; XIV. 20)

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥२१॥

बाह्यस्पर्शेषु in external contacts, असक्तात्मा one whose mind is unattached, विन्दति finds, आत्मनि in the Self, यत् (that) which, सुखम् happiness, सः he, ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा with the self engaged in the meditation of Brahman, सुखम् happiness, अक्षयम् endless, अश्नुते enjoys.

21. With the self unattached to external contacts he finds happiness in the Self; with the self engaged in the meditation of Brahman he attains to the endless happiness.

Commentary: When the mind is not attached to external objects of the senses, when one is deeply engaged in the contemplation of Brahman, he finds undecaying bliss in the Self within. If you want to enjoy the imperishable happiness of the Self within, you will have to withdraw the senses from their respective objects and plunge yourself in deep meditation on the Self within. This is the gist of this verse.

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ।।२२।।

ये which, हि verily, संस्पर्शजाः contact-born, भोगाः enjoyments, दुःखयोनयः generators of pain, एव only, ते they, आद्यन्तवन्तः having beginning and end, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, न not, तेषु in those, रमते rejoices, बुधः the wise.

22. The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only generators of pain, for they have a beginning and an end, O Arjuna: the wise man does not rejoice in them.

Commentary: Man goes in quest of joy and searches in the external perishable objects for his happiness. He fails to get it but instead he carries a load of sorrow on his head.

You should withdraw the senses from the sense-objects as there is no trace of happiness in them and fix the mind on the immortal, blissful Self within. The sense-objects have a beginning and an end. Separation from the sense-objects gives you a lot of pain. During the interval between the origin and the end you experience a hollow, momentary, illusory pleasure. This fleeting pleasure is due to Avidya or ignorance. Even in the other world you will have the same experience. He who is endowed with discrimination or the knowledge of the Self will never rejoice in these sensual objects. Only ignorant persons who are passionate will rejoice in the sense-objects. (*Cf.* II. 14, XVIII. 38)

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥२३॥

शक्नोति is able, इह here (in this world), एव even, यः who, सोढुम् to withstand, प्राक् before, शरीरविमोक्षणात् liberation from the body, कामक्रोधोद्भवम् born out of desire and anger, वेगम् the impulse, सः he, युक्तः united, सः he, सुखी happy, नरः man.

23. He who is able, while still here (in this world) to withstand, before the liberation from the body, the impulse born out of desire and anger—he is a Yogi, he is a happy man.

Commentary: *Yukta* means 'harmonised' or steadfast in Yoga or self-abiding.

Desire and anger are powerful enemies of peace. It is very difficult to annihilate them. You will have to make very strong efforts to destroy these enemies.

When the word *Kama* (desire) is used in a general sense it includes all sorts of desires. It means lust in a special sense.

While still here means 'while yet living'. The impulse of desire is the agitation of the mind which is indicated by hairs standing on end and cheerful face. The impulse of anger is agitation of the mind which is indicated by fiery eyes, perspiration, biting of the lips and trembling of the body. In this verse you will clearly understand that he who has controlled desire and anger is the most happy man in this world, not he who has immense wealth, a beautiful wife and beautiful children. Therefore you must try your level best to eradicate desire and anger, the dreadful enemies of eternal bliss.

Kama (desire) is longing for a pleasant and agreeable object which gives pleasure and which is seen, heard of, or remembered. Anger is aversion towards an unpleasant and disagreeable object which gives pain and which is seen, heard of, or remembered.

A Yogi controls the impulse born of desire and anger, destroys the currents of likes and dislikes and attains to equanimity of the mind, by resting in the innermost Self, and so he is very happy. (*Cf.* VI. 18)

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥

यः who, अन्तःसुखः one whose happiness is within, अन्तरारामः one who rejoices within, तथा also, अन्तर्ज्योतिः one who is illuminated within, एव even, यः who, सः that, योगी Yogi, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् absolute freedom or Moksha, ब्रह्मभूतः becoming Brahman, अधिगच्छति attains.

24. He who is happy within, who rejoices within, and who is illuminated within, that Yogi attains absolute freedom or Moksha, himself becoming Brahman.

Commentary: *Within* means "in the Self." He attains *Brahmanirvanam* or liberation while living. He becomes a Jivanmukta.

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥२५॥

लभन्ते obtain, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् absolute freedom, ऋषयः the Rishis, क्षीणकल्मषाः those whose sins are destroyed, छिन्नद्वैधाः whose dualities are torn asunder, यतात्मानः those who are self-controlled, सर्वभूतहिते in the welfare of all beings, रताः rejoicing.

25. The sages (Rishis) obtain absolute freedom or Moksha—they whose sins have been destroyed, whose dualities (perception of dualities or experience of the pairs of opposites) are torn asunder, who are self-controlled, and intent on the welfare of all beings.

Commentary: Sins are destroyed by the performance of Agnihotra (a daily obligatory ritual) and other Yajnas (*vide* notes on verse III. 13) without expectation of their fruits and by other selfless services. The duties vanish by constant meditation on the non-dual Brahman. He never hurts others in thought, word and deed, and he is devoted to the welfare of all beings as he feels that all beings are but his own Self. (*Cf.* XII. 4)

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानाम् of those who are free from desire and anger, यतीनाम् of the self-controlled ascetics, यतचेतसाम् of those who have controlled their thoughts, अभितः on all sides, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् absolute freedom, वर्तते exists, विदितात्मनाम् of those who have realised the Self.

26. Absolute freedom (or Brahmic bliss) exists on all sides for those self-controlled ascetics who are free from desire and anger, who have controlled their thoughts and who have realised the Self.

Commentary: Those who renounce all actions and practise Sravana (hearing of the scriptures), Manana (reflection) and Nididhyasana (meditation), who are established in Brahman or who are steadily devoted to the knowledge of the Self attain liberation or Moksha instantaneously (Kaivalya Moksha). Karma Yoga leads to Moksha step by step (Krama Mukti). First comes purification of the mind, then knowledge, then renunciation of all actions and eventually Moksha.

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥

स्पर्शान् contacts, कृत्वा बहिः shutting out, बाह्यान् external, चक्षुः eye (gaze), च and, एव even, अन्तरे in the middle, भ्रुवोः of the (two) eyebrows, प्राणापानौ the outgoing and incoming breaths, समौ equal, कृत्वा having made, नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ moving inside the nostrils.

27. Shutting out (all) external contacts and fixing the gaze between the eyebrows, equalising the outgoing and incoming breaths moving within the nostrils,

Commentary: The verses 27 and 28 deal with the Yoga of meditation (Dhyana). External objects or contacts are the sound and the other sense-objects. If the mind does not think of the external objects they are shut out from the mind. The senses are the doors or avenues through which sound and the other sense-objects enter the mind.

If you fix the gaze between the eyebrows the eyeballs remain fixed and steady. Rhythmical breathing is described here. You will have to make the breath rhythmical. The mind becomes steady when the breath becomes rhythmical. When the breath becomes rhythmical there is perfect harmony in the mind and the whole system. (Cf. VI. 10, 14; VIII. 10)

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥२८॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिः with senses, mind and intellect (ever) controlled, मुनिः the sage, मोक्षपरायणः having liberation as his supreme goal, विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधः free from desire, fear and anger, यः who, सदा for ever, मुक्तः free, एव verily, सः he.

28. With the senses, the mind and the intellect (ever) controlled, having liberation as his supreme goal, free from desire, fear and anger—the sage is verily liberated for ever.

Commentary: If one is free from desire, fear and anger he enjoys perfect peace of mind. When the senses, the mind and the intellect are subjugated, the sage does constant contemplation and attains for ever to the absolute freedom or Moksha.

The mind becomes restless when the modifications of desire, fear and anger arise in it. When one becomes desireless, the mind moves towards the Self spontaneously; liberation or Moksha becomes his highest goal.

'Muni' is one who does Manana or reflection and contemplation.

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२९॥

भोक्तारम् the enjoyer, यज्ञतपसाम् of sacrifices and austerities, सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् the great Lord of all worlds, सुहृदम् friend, सर्वभूतानाम् of all beings, ज्ञात्वा having known, माम् Me, शान्तिम् peace, ऋच्छति attains.

29. He who knows Me as the enjoyer of sacrifices and austerities, the great Lord of all the worlds and the friend of all beings, attains to peace.

Commentary: I am the Lord of all sacrifices and austerities. I am their author, goal and their God. I am the friend of all beings, the doer of good to them without expecting any return for it. I am the dispenser of the fruits of all actions and the silent witness of their minds, thoughts and actions as I dwell in their hearts. On knowing Me, they attain peace and liberation or Moksha (deliverance from the round of birth and death and all worldly miseries and sorrows). (*Cf.* V. 15; IX. 24)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
कर्मसंन्यासयोगो नाम पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Renunciation of Action.

अथ षष्ठोऽध्यायः

SIXTH DISCOURSE

ध्यानयोगः

THE YOGA OF MEDITATION

श्री भगवानुवाच

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥१॥

अनाश्रितः not depending (on), कर्मफलम् fruit of action, कार्यम् bounden, कर्म duty, करोति performs, यः who, सः he, संन्यासी Sannyasi (ascetic), च and, योगी Yogi, च and, न not, निरग्निः without fire, न not, च and, अक्रियः without action.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. He who performs his bounden duty without depending on the fruits of his actions—he is a Sannyasi and a Yogi; not he who is without fire and without action.

Commentary: Actions such as Agnihotra, etc., performed without the expectation of their fruits purify the mind and become the means to Dhyana Yoga or the Yoga of Meditation.

Karyam Karma: bounden duty.

Niragnih: without fire. He who has renounced the daily rituals like Agnihotra, which are performed with the help of fire.

Akriya: without action. He who has renounced austerities and other meritorious acts like building rest-houses, charitable dispensaries, digging wells, feeding the poor, etc.

Sannyasi: he who has renounced the fruits of his actions. *Yogi:* he who has a steady mind. These two terms are applied to him in a secondary sense only. They are not used to denote that he is in reality a Sannyasi and a Yogi.

The Sannyasi performs neither Agnihotra nor other ceremonies. But simply to omit these without genuine renunciation will not make one a real Sannyasi. (*Cf.* V. 3)

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥२॥

यम् which, संन्यासम् renunciation, इति thus, प्राहुः (they) call, योगम् Yoga, तम् that, विद्धि know, पाण्डव O Pandava, न not, हि verily, असंन्यस्तसङ्कल्पः one who has not renounced thoughts, योगी Yogi, भवति becomes, कश्चन anyone.

2. Do thou, O Arjuna, know Yoga to be that which they call renunciation: no one verily becomes a Yogi who has not renounced thoughts.

Commentary: *Sankalpa* is the working of the imagining faculty of the mind that makes plans for the future and guesses the results of plans so formed. No one can become a Karma Yogi who plans and schemes and expects fruits for his actions. No devotee of action who has not renounced the thought of the fruits of his actions can become a Yogi of steady mind. The thought of the fruits will certainly make the mind unsteady.

Lord Krishna eulogises Karma Yoga here because it is the means or an external aid (Bahiranga Sadhana) to Dhyana Yoga. Karma Yoga is a stepping-stone to Dhyana Yoga. It leads to the Yoga of Meditation in due course. In order to encourage the practice of Karma Yoga it is stated here that Karma Yoga is Sannyasa. (*Cf.* V. 4)

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥३॥

आरुरुक्षोः wishing to climb, मुनेः of a Muni or sage, योगम् Yoga, कर्म action, कारणम् the cause, उच्यते is said, योगारूढस्य of one who has attained to Yoga, तस्य of him, एव even, शमः inaction (quiescence), कारणम् the cause, उच्यते is said.

3. For a sage who wishes to attain to Yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same sage who has attained to Yoga, inaction (quiescence) is said to be the means.

Commentary: For a man who cannot practise meditation for a long time and who is not able to keep his mind steady in meditation, action is a means to get himself enthroned in Yoga. Action purifies his mind and makes the mind fit for the practice of steady meditation. Action leads to steady concentration and meditation.

For the sage who is enthroned in Yoga, Sama or renunciation of actions is said to be the means.

The more perfectly he abstains from actions, the more steady his mind is, and the more peaceful he is, the more easily and thoroughly does his mind get fixed in the Self. "For a Brahmana there is no wealth like unto the knowledge of oneness and homogeneity (of the Self in all beings), truthfulness, good character, steadiness, harmlessness, straightforwardness and renunciation of all actions." (*Mahabharata, Santi Parva,* 175. 38)

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ।।४।।

यदा when, हि verily, न not, इन्द्रियार्थेषु in sense-objects, न not, कर्मसु in actions, अनुषज्जते is attached, सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी renouncer of all thoughts, योगारूढः one who has attained to Yoga, तदा then, उच्यते is said.

4. When a man is not attached to the sense-objects or to actions, having renounced all thoughts, then he is said to have attained to Yoga.

Commentary: *Yogarudha:* "he who is enthroned or established in Yoga." When a Yogi, by keeping the mind quite steady, by withdrawing it from the objects of the senses, has attachment neither for sensual objects such as sound, nor for the actions (*Karmas, Cf. notes to* V. 13), knowing that they are of no use to him; when he has renounced all thoughts which generate various sorts of desires for the objects of this world and of the next, then he is said to have become a Yogarudha.

Do not think of sense-objects. The desires will die by themselves. How can you free yourself from thinking of the objects? Think of God or the Self. Then you can avoid thinking of the objects. Then you can free yourself from thinking of the objects of the senses.

Renunciation of thoughts implies that all desires and all actions should be renounced, because all desires are born of thoughts. You think first and then act (strive) afterwards to possess the objects of your desire for enjoyment.

"Whatever a man desires, that he wills;
And whatever he wills, that he does."

—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad,* 4. 4. 5

Renunciation of all actions necessarily follows from the renunciation of all desires.

"O desire! I know where thy root lies. Thou art born of Sankalpa (thought). I will not think of thee and thou shalt cease to exist along with the root." —*Mahabharata, Santi Parva,* 177. 25

"Indeed desire is born of thought (Sankalpa), and of thought, Yajnas are born." —*Manu Smriti,* II. 2

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥५॥

उद्धरेत् should raise, आत्मना by the Self, आत्मानम् the self, न not, आत्मानम् the self, अवसादयेत् let (him) lower, आत्मा the Self, एव only, हि verily, आत्मनः of the self, बन्धुः friend, आत्मा the Self, एव only, रिपुः the enemy, आत्मनः of the self.

5. One should raise oneself by one's Self alone; let not one lower oneself; for the Self alone is the friend of oneself, and the Self alone is the enemy of oneself.

Commentary: Practise Yoga. Discipline the senses and the mind. Elevate yourself and become a Yogarudha. Attain to Yoga. Shine gloriously as a dynamic Yogi. Do not sink into the ocean of Samsara (transmigration). Do not become a worldly-minded man. Do not become a slave of lust, greed and anger. Rise above worldliness, become divine and attain Godhead.

You alone are your friend; you alone are your enemy. The so-called worldly friend is not your real friend, because he gets attached to you, wastes your time and puts obstacles on your path of Yoga. He is very selfish and keeps friendship with you only to extract something. If he is not able to get from you the object of his selfish interest, he forsakes you. Therefore he is your enemy in reality. If you are attached to your friend on account of delusion or affection, this will become a cause of your bondage to Samsara.

Friends and enemies are not outside. They exist in the mind only. It is the mind that makes a friend an enemy and an enemy a friend. Therefore the Self alone is the friend of oneself, and the Self alone is the enemy of oneself. The lower mind or the Asuddha Manas (impure mind) is your real enemy because it binds you to the Samsara, and the higher mind or the Sattvic mind (Suddha Manas or the pure mind) is your real friend, because it helps you in the attainment of Moksha.

बन्धुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥६॥

बन्धुः friend, आत्मा the Self, आत्मनः of the self, तस्य his, येन by whom, आत्मा the self, एव even, आत्मना by the Self, जितः is conquered, अनात्मनः of unconquered self, तु but, शत्रुत्वे in the place of an enemy, वर्तेत would remain, आत्मा the Self, एव even, शत्रुवत् like an enemy.

6. The Self is the friend of the self of him by whom the self has been conquered by the Self, but to the unconquered self, this Self stands in the position of an enemy, like an (external) foe.

Commentary: Conquer the lower mind through the higher mind. The lower mind is your enemy. The higher mind is your friend. If you make friendship with the higher mind you can subdue the lower mind quite easily. The lower mind is filled with Rajas and Tamas (passion and darkness). The higher mind is filled with Sattva or purity.

The Self is the friend of one who is self-controlled, and who has subjugated the lower mind and the senses. But the Self is an enemy of one who has no self-restraint, and who has not subdued the lower mind and the senses. Just as an external enemy does harm to him, so also his own (lower) self (mind) does harm to him. The lower mind injures him severely. The highest Self or Atman is the primary Self. Mind also is self. This is the secondary self.

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥७॥

जितात्मनः of the self-controlled, प्रशान्तस्य of the peaceful, परमात्मा the Supreme Self, समाहितः balanced, शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, तथा as also, मानापमानयोः in honour and dishonour.

7. The Supreme Self of him who is self-controlled and peaceful is balanced in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.

Commentary: The self-controlled Yogi who is rooted in the Self keeps poise amidst the pairs of opposites (Dvandvas) or the alternating waves of cold and heat, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour. When the Yogi has subdued his senses, when his mind is balanced and peaceful under all conditions, when he is not in the least influenced by the pairs of opposites, when he has renounced all actions, then the Highest Self really becomes his own Self. He attains to Self-realisation. As he rests in his own Self, he is ever serene or tranquil; he is not affected by the pairs of opposites, and he stands as adamant in the face of the changing conditions of Nature.

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥८॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा one who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom (Self-realisation), कूटस्थः unshaken, विजितेन्द्रियः who has conquered the senses, युक्तः united or harmonised, इति thus, उच्यते is said, योगी Yogi, समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः one to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same.

8. The Yogi who is satisfied with the knowledge and the wisdom (of the Self), who has conquered the senses, and to whom a clod of earth, a piece of stone and gold are the same, is

said to be harmonised (i.e., is said to have attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi).

Commentary: *Jnana* is Paroksha-Jnana or theoretical knowledge from the study of the scriptures. *Vijnana* is Visesha Jnana or Aparoksha Jnana, i.e., direct knowledge of the Self through Self-realisation (spiritual experience or Anubhava).

Kutastha means changeless like the anvil. Various kinds of iron pieces are hammered and shaped on the anvil, but the anvil remains unchanged. Even so the Yogi remains unshaken or unchanged or unaffected though he comes in contact with the sense-objects. So he is called Kutastha. Kutastha is another name of Brahman, the silent witness of the mind. (*Cf.* V. 18; VI. 18)

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥९॥

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु in the good-hearted, in friends, in enemies, in the indifferent, in neutrals, in haters and in relatives, साधुषु in the righteous, अपि also, च and, पापेषु in the unrighteous, समबुद्धिः one who has equal mind, विशिष्यते excels.

9. He who is of the same mind to the good-hearted, friends, enemies, the indifferent, the neutral, the hateful, the relatives, the righteous and the unrighteous, excels.

Commentary: *He excels:* He is the best among the Yogarudhas.

Samabuddhi is equanimity or evenness of mind. A Yogi of Samabuddhi has equal vision. He is quite impartial. He is the same to all. He makes no difference with reference to caste, creed or colour. He loves all as his own self, as rooted in the Self.

A *good-hearted* man does good to others without expecting any service from them in return.

Udasina is one who is quite indifferent.

A *neutral* is one who does not join any of the two contending parties. He stands as a silent spectator or witness.

The *righteous* are those who do righteous actions and follow the injunctions of the scriptures.

The *unrighteous* are those who do wrong and forbidden actions, who injure others and who do not follow the scriptures.

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥१०॥

योगी the Yogi, युञ्जीत let him keep the mind steady, सततम् constantly, आत्मानम् self, रहसि in solitude, स्थितः remaining, एकाकी alone, यतचित्तात्मा one with the mind and the body controlled, निराशीः free from hope, अपरिग्रहः non-covetousness.

10. Let the Yogi try constantly to keep the mind steady, remaining in solitude, alone, with the mind and the body controlled, and free from hope and covetousness.

Commentary: *The Yogi* who treads the path of renunciation (Nivritti-Marga) can practise meditation in a solitary cave in the mountains. He should renounce all possessions.

A householder with Yogic tendencies and spiritual inclination can practise meditation in a solitary and quiet room in his own house or any solitary place on the banks of any holy river (during the holidays or throughout the year if he is a whole-time aspirant or if he has retired from service).

The practice must be constant. Only then can one attain Self-realisation surely and quickly. He who practises meditation by fits and starts and for a few minutes daily will not be able to achieve any tangible results in Yoga. The Yogic aspirant should be free from hope, desire and greed. Only then will he have a steady mind. Hope, desire and greed make the mind ever restless and turbulent. They are the enemies of peace and Self-knowledge. The aspirant should not have many possessions either. He can only keep those articles which are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of his body. If there are many possessions, the mind will be ever thinking of them and attempting to protect them.

If you are well established in the practice of Pratyahara, Sama and Dama (withdrawal of the senses, control of mind and the body respectively), if you have the senses under your full control, you can find perfect solitude and peace even in the most crowded and noisy place of a big city. If the senses are turbulent, if you have not got the power to withdraw them, you will have no peace of mind even in a solitary cave of the Himalayas. A disciplined Yogi who has controlled the senses and the mind can enjoy peace of mind in a solitary cave. A passionate man who has not controlled the senses and the mind will only be building castles in the air if he lives in a solitary cave in a mountain.

He who has reduced his wants, who has not a bit of attraction for the world, who has discrimination and burning aspiration for liberation, and who has observed Mauna (the vow of silence) for months together will be able to live in a cave.

You should have perfect control over the body through the regular practice of Yoga Asanas before you take to serious and constant meditation.

Aparigraha means 'non-covetousness', 'freedom from possessions'.

The spiritual aspirant need not bother himself about his bodily needs. Everything is provided by God. Everything is pre-arranged by Mother Nature. She looks after the bodily needs of all very carefully in a more efficient manner than they themselves would do. She knows better what the requirements are and provides them then and there. Understand the mysterious ways of Mother Nature and become wise. Be grateful to Her for Her unique kindness, grace and mercy.

If you want to retire into solitude for the practice of meditation, and if you are a householder with a thirst for intense spiritual Sadhana, you cannot all of a sudden sever your connection with your family. Sudden severance of worldly ties may produce intense mental agony in you and shock in them. You will have to break the ties gradually. Stay for a week or a month in seclusion to begin with. Then gradually prolong the period. They will not feel the pangs of separation from you.

As your will has become very weak, as you had no religious discipline or training in schools and colleges when you were young, and as you are under the sway of materialistic influences, it is necessary for you to go in for seclusion for some days or weeks (during the Christmas, Easter or other holidays) to practise rigorous Japa and meditation and to develop your will-power.

Those who have fixed up their sons in life and who have retired from service, and who have discharged their duties as householders can remain in seclusion for four or five years and practise intense meditation and Tapas (penance) for self-purification and Self-realisation. This is like entering a university for higher studies or postgraduate course of study. When the Tapas is over, and when they have attained to Self-knowledge, they should come out and share their knowledge of the Self with others through lectures, conversations, discourses or heart-to-heart talks according to their capacity and disposition.

How can sense-control be tested in a lonely forest where there are no temptations? The Yogic student living in a cave should test himself after he has sufficiently advanced, by coming into the society of people. But he should not test himself every now and then like the man who removed the young plant daily after watering it to see whether it had struck deep root or not.

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥११॥

शुचौ in a clean, देशे spot, प्रतिष्ठाप्य having established, स्थिरम् firm, आसनम् seat, आत्मनः his own, न not, अत्युच्छ्रितम् very high, न not, अतिनीचम् very low, चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् a cloth, skin and Kusa-grass, one over the other.

11. In a clean spot, having established a firm seat of his own, neither too high nor too low, made of a cloth, a skin and Kusa-grass, one over the other.

Commentary: In this verse the Lord has prescribed the external seat for practising meditation. Details of the pose are given in verse 13.

Spread the Kusa-grass on the ground first. Over this spread a tiger-skin or deer-skin; over this spread a white cloth.

Sit on a naturally clean spot, such as the bank of a river. Or, make the place clean, wherever you want to practise meditation.

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥१२॥

तत्र there, एकाग्रम् one-pointed, मनः the mind, कृत्वा having made, यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः one who has controlled the actions of the mind and the senses, उपविश्य being seated, आसने on the seat, युञ्ज्यात् let him practise, योगम् Yoga, आत्मविशुद्धये for the purification of the self.

12. There, having made the mind one-pointed, with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled, let him, seated on the seat, practise Yoga for the purification of the self.

Commentary: *The self* means the mind. The real Supreme Self is the Atma. This is Primary (Mukhya). Mind also is the self. But this is used in a secondary sense (Gauna). Mukhya Atma is Brahman or the highest Self. Gauna Atma is the mind.

Make the mind one-pointed by collecting all its dissipated rays by the practice of Yoga. Withdraw it from all sense-objects again and again and try to fix it steadily on your Lakshya or point of meditation or centre. Gradually you will have concentration of the mind or one-pointedness. You must be very regular in your practice. Only then will you succeed. Regularity is of paramount importance. You should know the ways and habits of the mind through daily introspection, self-analysis or self-examination. You should have a knowledge of the laws of the mind. Then it will be easy for you to check the wandering mind. When you sit for meditation, and when you deliberately attempt to forget the worldly objects, all sorts of worldly thoughts will crop up in your mind and disturb your meditation. You will be quite astonished. Old thoughts that you entertained several years ago, and old memories of past enjoyments will bubble up and force the mind to wander in all directions. You will find that the trap-door of the vast subconscious mind is opened or the lid of the storehouse of thoughts within is lifted up and the thoughts gush out in a continuous stream. The more you attempt to still them, the more they will bubble up with redoubled force and strength.

Be not discouraged. *Nil desperandum.* Never despair. Through regular and constant meditation you can purify the subconscious mind and its constant memories. The fire of meditation will burn all thoughts. Be sure of this. Meditation is a potent antidote to annihilate the poisonous worldly thoughts. Be assured of this.

Meditation on the immortal Self will act like a dynamite and blow up all thoughts and memories in the conscious mind. If the thoughts trouble you much, do not try to suppress them by force. Be a silent witness as in a bioscope. They will subside gradually. Then try to root them out through regular silent meditation.

During introspection you can clearly observe the rapid shifting of the mind from one line of thought to another. Herein lies a chance for you to mould the mind properly and direct the thoughts and the mental energy in the divine channel. You can rearrange the thoughts and make new associations on a new Sattvic basis. You can throw out worldly and useless thoughts. Just as you remove the weeds and throw them out, you can throw these out, and you can cultivate sublime, divine thoughts in the divine garden of your mind. This is a very patient work. This is a stupendous task indeed. But for a Yogi of determination who has the grace of the Lord and an iron will it is nothing.

Calm the bubbling emotions, sentiments, instincts and impulses gradually through silent meditation. You can give a new orientation to your feelings by gradual and systematic practice. You can entirely transmute your worldly nature into divine nature. You can exercise supreme control over the nerve-currents, muscles, the five sheaths (of the Self), emotions, impulses and instincts through meditation.

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ।।१३।।

समम् erect, कायशिरोग्रीवम् body, head and neck, धारयन् holding, अचलम् still, स्थिरः steady, संप्रेक्ष्य gazing at, नासिकाग्रम् tip of the nose, स्वम् one's own, दिशः directions, च and, अनवलोकयन् not looking.

13. Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking around.

Commentary: The Lord describes here the pose or Asana and the Drishti (gaze) in this verse.

You cannot practise meditation without a firm seat. If the body is unsteady, the mind will also become unsteady. There is an intimate connection between the body and the mind.

You should not shake the body even a bit. You should attain mastery over the Asana (Asana-Jaya) by daily practice. You should be as firm as a statue or a rock. If you keep the body, head and neck erect, the spinal cord also will be erect and the Kundalini will rise up steadily through the subtle 'nerve-channel' (Nadi) called the Sushumna. Sit in the 'lotus pose' or the 'adept pose'. This will help you in maintaining the nervous equilibrium and mental poise. You should steadily direct your gaze towards the tip of your nose. This is known as the *Nasikagra Drishti.* The other gaze is the Bhrumadhya Drishti or gazing between the two eyebrows where the psychic centre known as the Ajna Chakra is situated. This is described in chapter V, verse 27. In Bhrumadhya Drishti direct the gaze towards the Ajna Chakra with closed eyes. If you practise this with open eyes, it may produce headache. Foreign particles or dust may fall into the eyes. There may be distraction of the mind also. Do not strain the eyes. Practise gently. When you practise concentration at the tip of the nose you will experience Divya-Gandha (various aromas). When you concentrate your gaze at the Ajna Chakra you will experience Divya-Jyotis (perception of supra-phenomenal lights). This is an experience to give you encouragement, push you up in the spiritual path and convince you of the existence of transcendental or supra-physical things. Do not stop your Sadhana. Yogins and those Bhaktas who meditate on Lord Siva concentrate on the Ajna Chakra with the Bhrumadhya Drishti. You can select whichever Drishti suits you best.

Though the gaze is directed towards the tip of the nose when the eyes are half-closed and the eyeballs are steady the mind should be fixed only on the Self. Therefore you will have to gaze, as it were, at the tip of the nose. In chapter VI, verse 25, the Lord says: 'Having made the mind abide in the Self, let him not think of anything'. Gazing at the tip of the nose will soon bring about concentration of the mind.

Whichever be the point selected, visualise your own tutelary deity there and feel His Living Presence.

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥१४॥

प्रशान्तात्मा serene-minded, विगतभीः fearless, ब्रह्मचारिव्रते in the vow of Brahmacharya, स्थितः firm, मनः the mind, संयम्य having controlled, मच्चित्तः thinking on Me, युक्तः balanced, आसीत let him sit, मत्परः Me as the supreme goal.

14. Serene-minded, fearless, firm in the vow of a Brahmachari, having controlled the mind, thinking of Me and balanced in mind, let him sit, having Me as his supreme goal.

Commentary: The spiritual aspirant should possess serenity of mind. The Divine Light can descend only in a serene mind. Serenity is attained by the eradication of Vasanas or desires and cravings. He should be fearless. This is the most important qualification. A timid man or a coward is very far from Self-realisation.

A Brahmachari (celibate) should serve his Guru or the spiritual preceptor whole-heartedly and should live on alms. This also constitutes the *Brahmachari-Vrata*. The aspirant should control the modifications of the mind. He should be balanced in pleasure and pain, heat and cold, honour and dishonour. He should ever think of the Lord and take Him as the Supreme Goal.

Brahmacharya also means continence. Semen or the vital fluid tones the nerves and the brain, and energises the whole system. That Brahmachari who has preserved this vital force by the vow of celibacy and sublimated it into Ojas Sakti or radiant spiritual power can practise steady meditation for a long period. Only he can ascend the ladder of Yoga. Without Brahmacharya or celibacy not an iota of spiritual progress is possible. Continence is the very foundation on which the superstructure of meditation and Samadhi can be built up. Many persons waste this vital energy—a great spiritual treasure indeed—when they become blind and lose their power of reason under sexual excitement. Pitiable is their lot! They cannot make substantial progress in Yoga.

युञ्जन्नेवं सदाऽऽत्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥१५॥

युञ्जन् balancing, एवम् thus, सदा always, आत्मानम् the self, योगी Yogi, नियतमानसः one with the controlled mind, शान्तिम् to peace, निर्वाणपरमाम् that which culminates in Nirvana (Moksha), मत्संस्थाम् abiding in Me, अधिगच्छति attains.

15. Thus always keeping the mind balanced, the Yogi, with the mind controlled, attains to the peace abiding in Me, which culminates in liberation.

Commentary: *Thus:* in the manner prescribed in the previous verse.

The Supreme Self is an embodiment of peace. It is an ocean of peace. When one attains to the supreme peace of the Eternal, by controlling the modifications of the mind and keeping it always balanced, he attains to liberation or perfection.

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥१६॥

न not, अत्यश्नतः of one who eats too much, तु verily, योगः Yoga, अस्ति is, न not, च and, एकान्तम् at all, अनश्नतः of one who does not eat, न not, च and, अतिस्वप्नशीलस्य of one who sleeps too much, जाग्रतः one who is awake, न not, एव even, च and, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

16. Verily Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much, nor for him who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who is (always) awake, O Arjuna.

Commentary: In this verse the Lord prescribes the diet for the students of Yoga. You must observe moderation in eating and sleeping. If you eat too much you will feel drowsy, and sleep will overpower you. You will get indigestion, flatulence, diseases of the bowels and the liver. If you eat too little you will get weakness and you will not be able to sit for a long time in meditation. You should eat neither more nor less than what is actually necessary for maintaining the body in a healthy and strong state.

It may mean also that success in Yoga is not possible for him who eats more than the quantity prescribed in the text books on Yoga. They prescribe: “Half the stomach must be filled with food; a quarter with water and the remaining fourth must be empty for the free movement of air.” This is the Mitahara or moderate diet for a student of Yoga.

If you sleep too much you will become lethargic. The mind will be dull and the body will be heavy. You cannot meditate. If you sleep too little you will experience drowsiness. You will sleep during meditation. Keep the golden medium. You will have rapid progress in Yoga.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥१७॥

युक्ताहारविहारस्य of one who is moderate in eating and recreation (such as walking, etc.), युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु of one who is moderate in exertion in actions, युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य of one who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness, योगः Yoga, भवति becomes, दुःखहा the destroyer of pain.

17. Yoga becomes the destroyer of pain for him who is moderate in eating and recreation (such as walking, etc.), who is moderate in exertion in actions, who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness.

Commentary: In this verse the Lord prescribes for the student of Yoga, diet, recreation and the like. The student of Yoga should always adopt the happy medium or the middle course. Lord Buddha went to the extremes in the beginning in matters of food, drink, etc. He was very abstemious and became extremely weak. He tortured his body very much. Therefore he was not able to attain to success in Yoga. Too much of austerity is not necessary for Self-realisation. This is condemned by the Lord in chapter XVII, verses 5 and 6. Austerity should not mean self-torture. Then it becomes diabolical. The Buddhi Yoga of Krishna is a wise approach to austerity. Some aspirants take asceticism as the goal; it is only the means but not the end. The nervous system is extremely sensitive. It responds even to very slight changes and causes distraction of the mind. It is, therefore, very necessary that you should lead a very regulated and disciplined life and should be moderate in food, sleep and recreation. Take measured food. Sleep and wake up at the prescribed time. Sleep at 9 or 10 p.m. and get up at 3 or 4 a.m. Only then will you attain to success in Yoga which will kill all sorts of pains and sorrows of this life.

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ।।१८।।

यदा when, विनियतम् perfectly controlled, चित्तम् mind, आत्मनि in the Self, एव only, अवतिष्ठते rests, निःस्पृहः free from longing, सर्वकामेभ्यः from all (objects of) desires, युक्तः united, इति thus, उच्यते is said, तदा then.

18. When the perfectly controlled mind rests in the Self only, free from longing for all the objects of desires, then it is said, 'He is united'.

Commentary: *Perfectly controlled mind:* The mind with one-pointedness.

When all desires for the objects of pleasure seen or unseen die, the mind becomes very peaceful and rests steadily in the Supreme Self within. As the Yogi is perfectly harmonised, as he has attained to oneness with the Self and as he has become identical with Brahman, sense phenomena and bodily affections do not disturb him. He is conscious of his immortal, imperishable and invincible nature.

Yukta means 'united' (with the Self) or harmonised or balanced. Without union with the Self neither harmony nor balance nor Samadhi is possible. (*Cf.* V. 23; VI. 8)

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ।।१९।।

यथा as, दीपः lamp, निवातस्थः placed in a windless place, न not, इङ्गते flicker, सा that, उपमा simile, स्मृता is thought, योगिनः of the Yogi,

यतचित्तस्य of one with controlled mind, युञ्जतः of the practising, योगम् the Yoga, आत्मनः of the Self.

19. As a lamp placed in a windless spot does not flicker —to such is compared the Yogi of controlled mind, practising Yoga in the Self (or absorbed in the Yoga of the Self).

Commentary: This is a beautiful simile. Yogins quote this *simile* very often when they talk of concentration or steadiness or one-pointedness of the mind. A steady mind will serve as a powerful searchlight to find out the hidden spiritual treasures of the Self.

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।
यत्र चैवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥२०॥

यत्र where, उपरमते attains quietude, चित्तम् mind, निरुद्धम् restrained, योगसेवया by the practice of Yoga, यत्र where, च and, एव only, आत्मना by the Self, आत्मानम् the Self, पश्यन् seeing, आत्मनि in the Self, तुष्यति is satisfied.

20. When the mind, restrained by the practice of Yoga attains to quietude and when seeing the Self by the self, he is satisfied in his own Self,

Commentary: The verses 20, 21, 22 and 23 must be taken together.

When the mind is completely withdrawn from the objects of the senses, supreme peace reigns within the heart. When the mind becomes quite steady by constant and protracted practice of concentration the Yogi beholds the Supreme Self by the mind which is rendered pure and one-pointed and attains to supreme satisfaction in the Self within.

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥२१॥

सुखम् bliss, आत्यन्तिकम् infinite, यत् which, तत् that, बुद्धिग्राह्यम् that which can be grasped by reason, अतीन्द्रियम् transcending the senses, वेत्ति knows, यत्र where, न not, च and, एव even, अयम् this, स्थितः established, चलति moves, तत्त्वतः from the Reality.

21. When he (the Yogi) feels that Infinite Bliss which can be grasped by the (pure) intellect and which transcends the senses, and established wherein he never moves from the Reality,

Commentary: The Infinite Bliss of the Self (which is beyond the reach of the senses) can be grasped (realised) by the pure intellect independently of the senses. During deep meditation the senses cease to function, as they are involved into their cause, the mind. The intellect is rendered pure by the practice of Yama (self-restraint) and Niyama (observances and disciplinary practices) and constant meditation.

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ।।२२।।

यम् which, लब्ध्वा having obtained, च and, अपरम् other, लाभम् gain, मन्यते thinks, न not, अधिकम् greater, ततः than that, यस्मिन् in which, स्थितः established, न not, दुःखेन by sorrow, गुरुणा (by) heavy, अपि even, विचाल्यते is moved.

22. Which, having obtained, he thinks there is no other gain superior to it; wherein established, he is not moved even by heavy sorrow,

Commentary: *Which:* the gain or the realisation of the Self or the immortal Soul.

Wherein: in the all-blissful Self which is free from delusion and sorrow. The Self is all-full and self-contained. All the desires are fulfilled when one attains Self-realisation. That is the reason why the Lord says: "There is no other acquisition superior to Self-realisation." If one gets himself established in the Supreme Self within, he cannot be shaken even by heavy sorrow and pain, because he is mindless and he is identifying himself with the sorrowless and painless Brahman. One can experience pain and sorrow when he identifies himself with the body and the mind. If there is no mind there cannot be any pain. When one is under chloroform he feels no pain even when his hand is amputated, because the mind is withdrawn from the body.

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ।।२३।।

तम् that, विद्यात् let (him) know, दुःखसंयोगवियोगम् a state of severance from union with pain, योगसंज्ञितम् called by the name of Yoga, सः that, निश्चयेन with determination, योक्तव्यः should be practised, योगः Yoga, अनिर्विण्णचेतसा with undesponding mind.

23. Let that be known by the name of Yoga, the severance from union with pain. This Yoga should be practised with determination and with an undesponding mind.

Commentary: In verses 20, 21 and 22 the Lord describes the benefits of Yoga, viz., perfect satisfaction by resting in the Self, infinite unending bliss, freedom from sorrow and pain, etc. He further adds that this Yoga should be practised with a firm conviction and iron determination and with non-depression of heart. A spiritual aspirant with a wavering mind will not able to attain success in Yoga. He will leave the practice when he meets with some obstacles on the path. The practitioner must also be bold, cheerful and self-reliant.

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥२४॥

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान् born of Sankalpa (imagination), कामान् desires, त्यक्त्वा having abandoned, सर्वान् all, अशेषतः without reserve, मनसा by the mind, एव even, इन्द्रियग्रामम् the whole group of senses, विनियम्य completely restraining, समन्ततः from all sides.

24. Abandoning without reserve all desires born of Sankalpa (thought and imagination) and completely restraining the whole group of the senses by the mind from all sides,

Commentary: *Without reserve:* The mind is so diplomatic that it keeps certain desires for its secret gratification. Therefore you should completely abandon all desires without reservation.

Desire is born of imagination (Sankalpa). Therefore destroy the Sankalpa first. If the imagination is annihilated first then the desires will die by themselves. Mark here! All the senses must be controlled from all sides by the mind. Even if one sense is turbulent in one direction it will distract the mind often and often. The senses will be absorbed in the mind by the constant practice of abstraction (Pratyahara). Then the mind will not think of the objects of sense-pleasure and will become perfectly calm.

That mind which is endowed with a strong discrimination and dispassion will be able to control the whole ground (or group) of the senses from their objects in all directions. Therefore cultivate strong Viveka or discrimination between the Real and the unreal and also Vairagya or total dispassion for sensual pleasures. (*Cf.* II. 62)

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥२५॥

शनैः gradually, शनैः gradually, उपरमेत् let him attain to quietude, बुद्ध्या by the intellect, धृतिगृहीतया held in firmness, आत्मसंस्थम् placed in the Self, मनः the mind, कृत्वा having made, न not, किञ्चित् anything, अपि even, चिन्तयेत् let him think.

25. Little by little let him attain to quietude by the intellect held firmly; having made the mind establish itself in the Self, let him not think of anything.

Commentary: The practitioner of Yoga should attain tranquillity gradually or by degrees, by means of the intellect controlled by steadiness. The peace of the Eternal will fill the heart gradually with thrill and bliss through the constant and protracted practice of steady concentration. He should make the mind constantly abide in the Self within through ceaseless practice. If anyone constantly thinks of the immortal Self within, the mind will cease to think of the objects of sense-pleasure. The mental energy should be directed along the spiritual channel by Atma-chintana or constant contemplation on the Self.

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥२६॥

यतःयतः from whatever cause, निश्चरति wanders away, मनः mind, चञ्चलम् restless, अस्थिरम् unsteady, ततःततः from that, नियम्य having restrained, एतत् this, आत्मनि in the Self, एव alone, वशम् (under) control, नयेत् let (him) bring.

26. From whatever cause the restless and unsteady mind wanders away, from that let him restrain it and bring it under the control of the Self alone.

Commentary: In this verse the Lord gives the method to control the mind. Just as you drag the bull again and again to your house when it runs out, so also you will have to drag the mind to your point or centre or Lakshya again and again when it runs towards the external objects. If you give good cotton seed extract, sugar, plantains, etc., to the bull, it will not run away but will remain in your house. Even so if you make the mind taste the eternal bliss of the Self within little by little by the practice of concentration, it will gradually abide in the Self only and will not run towards the external objects of the senses. Sound and the other objects only make the mind restless and unsteady. By knowing the defects of the objects of sensual pleasure, by understanding their illusory nature, by the cultivation of discrimination between the Real and the unreal and also dispassion, and by making the mind understand the glory and the splendour of the Self you can wean the mind entirely away from sensual objects and fix it firmly on the Self.

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ।।२७।।

प्रशान्तमनसम् one of peaceful mind, हि verily, एनम् this, योगिनम् Yogi, सुखम् bliss, उत्तमम् supreme, उपैति comes, शान्तरजसम् one whose passion is quieted, ब्रह्मभूतम् one who has become Brahman, अकल्मषम् one who is free from sin.

27. Supreme Bliss verily comes to this Yogi whose mind is quite peaceful, whose passion is quieted, who has become Brahman and who is free from sin.

Commentary: In this verse and in the next also the Lord describes the benefits of Yoga.

Supreme (eternal, unalloyed and uninterrupted) bliss comes to the Yogi whose mind is perfectly serene, who has calmed his passionate nature, who has destroyed all sorts of attachments, who has attained knowledge of the Self and thus become a Jivanmukta or one who is liberated while living, who feels that all is Brahman only, and who is taintless, i.e., who is not affected by Dharma or Adharma (good or evil).

युञ्जन्नेवं सदाऽऽत्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥२८॥

युञ्जन् practising Yoga, एवम् thus, सदा always, आत्मानम् the self, योगी Yogi, विगतकल्मषः freed from sin, सुखेन easily, ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शम् caused by contact with Brahman, अत्यन्तम् infinite, सुखम् bliss, अश्नुते enjoys.

28. The Yogi, always engaging the mind thus (in the practice of Yoga), freed from sins, easily enjoys the Infinite Bliss of contact with Brahman (the Eternal).

Commentary: By Yogic practices such as the withdrawal of the senses, concentration and meditation he loses contact with the objects of the senses and comes into contact with Brahman or the immortal Self within and thus enjoys the Infinite Bliss of Brahman.

Sensual pleasures are transitory or fleeting but the bliss of Brahman is uninterrupted, undecaying and everlasting. That is the reason why one should attempt to realise the Self within.

The Yogi removes the obstacles that stand in the way of obtaining union with the Lord and thus always keeps the mind steady in the Self.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥२९॥

सर्वभूतस्थम् abiding in all beings, आत्मानम् the Self, सर्वभूतानि all beings, च and, आत्मनि in the Self, ईक्षते sees, योगयुक्तात्मा one who is harmonised by Yoga, सर्वत्र everywhere, समदर्शनः one who sees the same everywhere.

29. With the mind harmonised by Yoga he sees the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; he sees the same everywhere.

Commentary: The Yogi beholds through the eye of intuition (Jnana-Chakshus or Divya-Chakshus) oneness or unity of the Self everywhere. This is a sublime and magnanimous vision indeed. He feels, 'All indeed is Brahman'. He beholds that all beings are one with Brahman and that the Self and Brahman are identical.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥३०॥

यः who, माम् Me, पश्यति sees, सर्वत्र everywhere, सर्वम् all, च and, मयि in Me, पश्यति sees, तस्य of him, अहम् I, न not, प्रणश्यामि vanish, सः he, च and, मे to Me, न not, प्रणश्यति vanishes.

30. He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, he never becomes separated from Me, nor do I become separated from him.

Commentary: In this verse the Lord describes the effect of the vision of the unity of the Self or oneness.

He who sees Me, the Self of all, in all beings, and everything (from Brahma the Creator down to the blade of grass) in Me, I am not lost to him, nor is he lost to Me. I and the sage or seer of unity of the Self become identical or one and the same. I never leave his presence nor does he leave My presence. I never lose hold of him nor does he lose hold of Me. I dwell in him and he dwells in Me.

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥३१॥

सर्वभूतस्थितम् abiding in all beings, यः who, माम् Me, भजति worships, एकत्वम् unity, आस्थितः established, सर्वथा in every way, वर्तमानः remaining, अपि also, सः that, योगी Yogi, मयि in Me, वर्तते abides.

31. He who, being established in unity, worships Me Who dwells in all beings, that Yogi abides in Me, whatever may be his mode of living.

Commentary: He who has dissolved all duality in the underlying unity, who is thus established in unity, who worships Me, i.e., who has realised Me as the Self of all, dwells always in Me, whatever his mode of living may be. He is ever liberated.

Sadana lived in God though he was a butcher because his mind was ever fixed at the lotus feet of the Lord.

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥

आत्मौपम्येन through the likeness of the Self, सर्वत्र everywhere, समम् equality, पश्यति sees, यः who, अर्जुन O Arjuna, सुखम् pleasure, वा and, यदि if, वा or, दुःखम् pain, सः he, योगी Yogi, परमः highest, मतः is regarded.

32. He who, through the likeness of the Self, O Arjuna, sees equality everywhere, be it pleasure or pain, he is regarded as the highest Yogi.

Commentary: He sees that whatever is pleasure or pain to himself is also pleasure or pain to all other beings. He does not harm anyone. He is quite harmless. He wishes good to all. He is compassionate to all creatures. He has a very soft and large heart. He sees thus equality everywhere as he is endowed with the right knowledge of the Self, as he beholds the Self only everywhere, and as he is established in the unity of the Self. Therefore he is considered as the highest among all Yogis. (*Cf.* VI. 47)

अर्जुन उवाच

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात् स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥३३॥

यः which, अयम् this, योगः Yoga, त्वया by Thee, प्रोक्तः taught, साम्येन by equanimity, मधुसूदन O slayer of Madhu, एतस्य its, अहम् I, न not, पश्यामि see, चञ्चलत्वात् from restlessness, स्थितिम् continuance, स्थिराम् steady.

Arjuna said:

33. This Yoga of equanimity taught by Thee, O Krishna, I do not see its steady continuance, because of the restlessness (of the mind).

Commentary: As the mind is restless, impetuous and unsteady I find it difficult to practise this Yoga of equanimity declared by Thee. O my Lord, I cannot have steady concentration of the mind, as it wanders here and there in the twinkling of an eye.

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥३४॥

चञ्चलम् restless, हि verily, मनः the mind, कृष्ण O Krishna, प्रमाथि turbulent, बलवत् strong, दृढम् unyielding, तस्य of it, अहम् I, निग्रहम् control, मन्ये think, वायोः of the wind, इव as, सुदुष्करम् difficult to do.

34. The mind verily is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding, O Krishna: I deem it as difficult to control it as to control the wind.

Commentary: The mind constantly changes its objects and so it is ever restless.

Krishna is derived from *Krish* which means 'to scrape'. He scrapes all the sins, evils, and the causes of evil from the hearts of His devotees. Therefore He is called Krishna.

The mind is not only restless but also turbulent or impetuous, strong and obstinate. It produces violent agitation in the body and the senses. The mind is drawn by the objects in all directions. It works always in conjunction with the five senses. It is drawn by them to the five kinds of objects. Therefore it is ever restless. It enjoys the five kinds of sense-objects with the help of these senses and the body. Therefore it makes them subject to external influences. It is even more difficult to control it than to control the wind. The mind is born of Vayutanmatra (wind root-element). That is the reason why it is as restless as the wind.

श्री भगवानुवाच

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलं ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥३५॥

असंशयम् undoubtedly, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, मनः the mind, दुर्निग्रहम् difficult to control, चलम् restless, अभ्यासेन by practice, तु but, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, वैराग्येण by dispassion, च and, गृह्यते is restrained.

The Blessed Lord said:

35. Undoubtedly, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the mind is difficult to control and restless; but by practice and by dispassion it may be restrained.

Commentary: The constant or repeated effort to keep the wandering mind steady by constant meditation on the Lakshya (centre, ideal, goal or object of meditation) is *Abhyasa* or practice. The same idea or thought of the Self or God is constantly repeated. This constant repetition destroys Vikshepa or the vacillation of the mind and desires, and makes it steady and one-pointed.

Vairagya is dispassion or indifference to sense-objects in this world or in the other, here or hereafter, seen or unseen, heard or unheard, achieved through constantly looking into the evil in them (Dosha-Drishti). You will have to train the mind by constant reflection on the immortal, all-blissful Self. You must make the mind realise the transitory nature of the worldly enjoyments. You must suggest to the mind to look for its enjoyment not in the perishable and changing external objects but in the immortal, changeless Self within. Gradually the mind will be withdrawn from the external objects.

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ।।३६।।

असंयतात्मना by a man of uncontrolled self, योगः Yoga, दुष्प्रापः hard to attain, इति thus, मे My, मतिः opinion, वश्यात्मना by the self-controlled one, तु but, यतता by the striving one, शक्यः possible, अवाप्तुम् to obtain, उपायतः by (proper) means.

36. I think Yoga is hard to be attained by one of uncontrolled self, but the self-controlled and striving one can attain to it by the (proper) means.

Commentary: *Uncontrolled self:* he who has not controlled the senses and the mind by the constant practice of dispassion and meditation. *Self-controlled:* he who has controlled the mind by the constant practice of dispassion and meditation. He can attain Self-realisation by the right means and constant endeavour.

अर्जुन उवाच

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।
अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥३७॥

अयतिः uncontrolled, श्रद्धया by faith, उपेतः possessed, योगात् from Yoga, चलितमानसः one whose mind wanders away, अप्राप्य not having attained, योगसंसिद्धिम् perfection in Yoga, काम् which, गतिम् end, कृष्ण O Krishna, गच्छति meets.

Arjuna said:

37. He who is unable to control himself though he has the faith, and whose mind wanders away from Yoga, what end does he, having failed to attain perfection in Yoga, meet, O Krishna?

Commentary: He has faith in the efficacy of Yoga but he is not able to control the senses and the mind. He has no concentration of mind. His mind wanders away when the last breath departs from his body and he loses the memory also. Having failed to achieve perfection in Yoga, i.e., Self-realisation or the knowledge of the Self, what path will he tread, and what end will such a man meet?

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥३८॥

कच्चित् is it that? न not, उभयविभ्रष्टः fallen from both, छिन्नाभ्रम् rent cloud, इव like, नश्यति perishes, अप्रतिष्ठः supportless, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, विमूढः deluded, ब्रह्मणः of Brahman, पथि in the path.

38. Fallen from both, does he not perish like a rent cloud, supportless, O mighty-armed (Krishna), deluded on the path of Brahman?

Commentary: *Both:* the path of Karma or the path of ritualistic activity in accordance with the Karma Kanda of the Vedas on the one hand and the path of Yoga on the other.

Path of Brahman: the path by which Brahman can be reached or the way that leads to Brahman.

The Yoga taught by the Lord here demands one-pointed devotion to its practice. The aspirant turns away from the world and spurns heaven, too. Some people held that if he failed to attain the goal, he would have lost everything for nothing. Hence the question.

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।
त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥३९॥

एतत् this, मे my, संशयम् doubt, कृष्ण O Krishna, छेत्तुम् to dispel, अर्हसि oughtest, अशेषतः completely, त्वत् than Thou, अन्यः another, संशयस्य of doubt, अस्य of this, छेत्ता dispeller, न not, हि verily, उपपद्यते is fit.

39. This doubt of mine, O Krishna, do Thou dispel completely; because it is not possible for any but Thee to dispel this doubt.

Commentary: There can be no better teacher than Thee, for Thou art the omniscient Lord. Thou alone canst dispel this doubt. A Rishi (seer), a Deva (god), or a Muni (sage) will not be able to destroy this doubt.

श्री भगवानुवाच

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥४०॥

पार्थ O Partha, न not, एव verily, इह here, न not, अमुत्र in the next world, विनाशः destruction, तस्य of him, विद्यते is, न not, हि verily, कल्याणकृत् he who does good, कश्चित् anyone, दुर्गतिम् bad state or grief, तात O My son, गच्छति goes.

The Blessed Lord said:

40. O Arjuna, neither in this world, nor in the next world is there destruction for him; none, verily, who does good, O My son, ever comes to grief.

Commentary: He who has not succeeded in attaining to perfection in Yoga in this birth will not be destroyed in this world or in the next world. Surely he will not take a birth lower than the present one. What will he attain, then? This is described by the Lord in verses 41, 42, 43 and 44.

Tata: *son.* A disciple is regarded as a son.

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥४१॥

प्राप्य having attained, पुण्यकृताम् of the righteous, लोकान् worlds, उषित्वा having dwelt, शाश्वतीः everlasting, समाः years, शुचीनाम् of the pure, श्रीमताम् of the wealthy, गेहे in the house, योगभ्रष्टः one fallen from Yoga, अभिजायते is born.

41. Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and having dwelt there for everlasting years, he who fell from Yoga is reborn in a house of the pure and wealthy.

Commentary: *Yogabhrashta:* one who has fallen from Yoga, i.e., one who was not able to attain perfection in Yoga, or one who climbed a certain height on the ladder of Yoga but fell down on account of lack of dispassion or slackness in the practice (by becoming a victim to Maya or his turbulent senses).

The righteous: Those who tread the path of truth, who do virtuous actions such as charity, Yajna, rituals, worship of the Lord, and who act in accordance with the prescribed rules of the scriptures.

Everlasting years means only a considerably long period but not absolutely everlasting.

The pure: those who lead a pure, moral life; those who have a pure heart (free from jealousy, hatred, pride, greed, etc.). (*Cf.* IX. 20, 21)

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥४२॥

अथवा or, योगिनाम् of Yogis, एव even, कुले in the family, भवति is born, धीमताम् of the wise, एतत् this, हि verily, दुर्लभतरम् very difficult, लोके in the world, जन्म birth, यत् which, ईदृशम् like this.

42. Or he is born in a family of even the wise Yogis; verily a birth like this is very difficult to obtain in this world.

Commentary: A birth in a family of wise Yogis is more difficult to obtain than the one mentioned in the preceding verse.

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥४३॥

तत्र there, तम् that, बुद्धिसंयोगम् union with knowledge, लभते obtains, पौर्वदेहिकम् acquired in his former body, यतते strives, च and, ततः than that, भूयः more, संसिद्धौ for perfection, कुरुनन्दन O son of the Kurus.

43. There he comes in touch with the knowledge acquired in his former body and strives more than before for perfection, O Arjuna.

Commentary: When he takes a human body again in this world his previous exertions and practice in the path of Yoga are not wasted. They bear full fruit now, and hasten his moral and spiritual evolution.

Our thoughts and actions are left in our subconscious minds in the form of subtle Samskaras or impressions. Our experiences in the shape of Samskaras, habits and tendencies are also stored up in our subconscious mind. These Samskaras of the past birth are revivified and re-energised in the next birth. The Samskaras of Yogic practices and meditation and the Yogic tendencies will compel the spiritual aspirant to strive with greater vigour than that with which he attempted in the former birth. He will endeavour more strenuously to get more spiritual experiences and to attain to higher planes of realisation than those acquired in his previous birth.

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥४४॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन former practice, तेन by that, एव verily, ह्रियते is borne, हि indeed, अवशः helpless, अपि even, सः he, जिज्ञासुः he who wishes to know Yoga, अपि even, योगस्य of Yoga, शब्दब्रह्म word-Brahman, अतिवर्तते goes beyond.

44. By that very former practice he is borne on in spite of himself. Even he who merely wishes to know Yoga goes beyond the Brahmic word.

Commentary: The man who fell from Yoga is carried to the goal which he intended to reach in his previous birth, by the force of the Samskaras of the practice of Yoga though he may not be conscious of them and even if he may not be willing to adopt the course of Yogic discipline on account of the force of some evil Karma. If he had not done any great evil action which could overwhelm his Yogic tendencies he will certainly continue his Yogic practices in this birth very vigorously through the force of the Yogic Samskaras created by his Yogic practices in his previous birth. If the force of the evil action is stronger, the Yogic tendencies will be over-powered or suppressed for some time. As soon as the fruits of the evil actions are exhausted, the force of the Yogic Samskaras will begin to manifest itself. He will start his Yogic practices vigorously and attain the final beatitude of life.

Even an enquirer in whom a desire for information about Yoga is kindled goes beyond the *Brahmic word,* i.e., the Vedas. He rises superior to the performer of the Vedic rituals and ceremonies. He is beyond the entanglement of forms and ceremonies. He is not satisfied with mere ritualism. He thirsts for a satisfaction higher than that given by the sensual objects. He who simply wishes to know the nature of the principles of Yoga frees himself from the *Sabda-Brahma,* i.e., from the effects of the Vedic rituals and ceremonies. If this be the case of a simple enquirer, how much more exalted should be the condition of a real practitioner or knower of Yoga or of one who is established in Nirvikalpa Samadhi? He will be absolutely free from the effects of the Vedic rituals and ceremonies. He will enjoy the eternal bliss and the everlasting peace of the Eternal.

An aspirant who is desirous of obtaining Moksha alone is not affected by the sin of non-performance of action even if he renounces all the obligatory and optional or occasional duties. He goes beyond the "word of Brahman" (the scripture or the Vedas).

When such is the case of an aspirant who is without any spiritual inclinations or Samskaras of the previous birth, how much more exalted will be the state of that student who has done Yogic practices in his previous birth, who has fallen from Yoga in his previous birth, and who has taken up Yoga in this birth, renouncing all the worldly activities?

Impelled by the strong desire for liberation he practises rigorous Sadhana in this birth. He is constrained, as it were, by the force of the good Samskaras of his previous birth to take to Yogic practices in spite of himself.

In this verse the Lord lays stress on the fact that no effort in the practice of Yoga goes in vain. Even the smallest effort will have its effect sooner or later in this birth or another. Therefore there is no cause for disappointment even for the dullest type of spiritual aspirant.

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ।।४५।।

प्रयत्नात् with assiduity, यतमानः striving, तु but, योगी the Yogi, संशुद्धकिल्बिषः purified from sins, अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धः perfected through many births, ततः then, याति reaches, पराम् the highest, गतिम् path.

45. But the Yogi who strives with assiduity, purified of sins and perfected gradually through many births, reaches the highest goal.

Commentary: He gains experiences little by little in the course of many births and eventually attains to perfection. Then he gets the knowledge of the Self and attains to the final beatitude of life.

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ।।४६।।

तपस्विभ्यः than ascetics, अधिकः superior, योगी the Yogi, ज्ञानिभ्यः than the wise, अपि even, मतः thought, अधिकः superior, कर्मिभ्यः than the men of action, च and, अधिकः superior, योगी the Yogi, तस्मात् therefore, योगी a Yogi, भव be, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

46. The Yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics and even superior to men of knowledge (obtained through the study of scriptures); he is also superior to men of action; therefore be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Tapasvi:* One who observes the austerities of speech, mind and body prescribed in chapter XVII. 14, 15 and 16.

Jnani: One who has a knowledge of the scriptures (an indirect knowledge or theoretical knowledge of the Self).

Karmi: He who performs the Vedic rituals.

To all these the Yogi is superior, for he has the direct knowledge of the Self through intuition or direct cognition through Nirvikalpa Samadhi. (*Cf.* V. 2; XII. 12; XIII. 24)

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ।।४७।।

योगिनाम् of Yogis, अपि even, सर्वेषाम् of all, मद्गतेन merged in Me, अन्तरात्मना with inner Self, श्रद्धावान् endowed with faith, भजते worships, यः who, माम् Me, सः he, मे to Me, युक्ततमः most devout, मतः is deemed.

47. And among all the Yogis he who, full of faith and with his inner self merged in Me, worships Me is deemed by Me to be the most devout.

Commentary: *Among all Yogis:* He who worships Me, the Absolute, is superior to those who worship the lesser gods such as the Vasus, Rudra, Aditya, etc.

The inner self merged in Me: The mind absorbed in Me, (*Cf.* VI. 32),

(This chapter is known by the names Atmasamyama Yoga and Adhyatma Yoga also.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
ध्यानयोगो नाम षष्ठोऽध्यायः ।।

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the sixth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Meditation.

अथ सप्तमोऽध्यायः

SEVENTH DISCOURSE

ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगः

THE YOGA OF WISDOM AND REALISATION

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥१॥

मयि on Me, आसक्तमनाः with mind intent, पार्थ O Partha, योगम् Yoga, युञ्जन् practising, मदाश्रयः taking refuge in Me, असंशयम् without doubt, समग्रम् wholly, माम् Me, यथा how, ज्ञास्यसि shalt know, तत् that, शृणु hear.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. O Arjuna, hear how you shall without doubt know Me fully, with the mind intent on Me, practising Yoga and taking refuge in Me.

Commentary: He who wishes to attain some result or reward performs the ritual known as Agnihotra or does charity, sinks wells, builds hospitals, resting places, etc., with Sakama Bhavana (with an inner profit motive) and attains them. But the Yogi on the contrary practises Yoga with a steadfast mind and takes refuge in the Lord alone, with the mind wholly fixed on Him, on His lofty attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinite love, beauty, grace, strength, mercy, inexhaustible wealth, ineffable splendour, pristine glory and purity.

The servant of a king, though he constantly serves the king, has not got his mind fixed on him. The mind is ever fixed on his wife and children. Unlike the servant, fix your mind on Me, (the all-pervading One), and take refuge in Me alone. Practise control of the mind in accordance with the instructions given in chapter VI. Then you will know Me and My infinite attributes in full.

If you sing the glory and the attributes of the Lord, you will develop love for Him and then your mind will be fixed on Him. Intense love for the Lord is real devotion. You must get full knowledge of the Self without any doubt.

He who has taken refuge in the Lord, and he who is trying to fix or has fixed his mind on the Lord cannot bear the separation from the Lord even for a second.

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥२॥

ज्ञानम् indirect knowledge of Sastras, ते to thee, अहम् I, सविज्ञानम् combined with realisation (direct knowledge of the Atman through experience), इदम् this, वक्ष्यामि will declare, अशेषतः in full, यत् which, ज्ञात्वा having known, न not, इह here, भूयः more, अन्यत् anything else, ज्ञातव्यम् what ought to be known, अवशिष्यते remains.

2. I shall declare to thee in full this knowledge combined with realisation, after knowing which nothing more here remains to be known.

Commentary: *Jnanam* is Paroksha Jnanam or indirect knowledge of Brahman obtained through the study of the Upanishads. *Vijnanam* is Visesha Jnanam, i.e., Aparoksha Jnanam obtained through direct Self-realisation (intuitional wisdom).

In this verse the Lord praises knowledge in order to make Arjuna follow His instruction closely with rapt attention, faith and interest. The Lord says: “I shall teach thee in full. You will attain to omniscience or perfect knowledge of the Self, after knowing which nothing more remains to be known here.” If anyone attains the knowledge of the Self, he will know everything. That is the reason why Saunaka, the great householder, approached Angirasa respectfully and asked: “What is that, O Lord, which being known all this becomes known?” (*Cf.* XIII. 11)

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥३॥

मनुष्याणाम् of men, सहस्रेषु among thousands, कश्चित् some one, यतति strives, सिद्धये for perfection, यतताम् of the striving ones, अपि even, सिद्धानाम् of the successful ones, कश्चित् some one, माम् Me, वेत्ति knows, तत्त्वतः in essence.

3. Among thousands of men, one perchance strives for perfection: even among those successful strivers, only one perchance knows Me in essence.

Commentary: Mark how difficult it is to attain to the knowledge of the Self or to know Brahman in essence. *Siddhanam:* literally means those who have attained to perfection (the perfected ones) but here it means only those who strive to attain perfection.

Those who purchase diamonds, rubies or pearls are few. Those who study the postgraduate course are few. Even so those who attempt for Self-realisation and who actually know the Truth in essence are few only. The liberated ones (Jivanmuktas) are rare. Real Sadhakas are also rare. The knowledge of the Self bestows incalculable fruits on man, viz., immortality, eternal bliss, perennial joy and everlasting peace. It is very difficult to attain to this knowledge of the Self. But a good and earnest spiritual aspirant (Sadhaka) who is endowed with a strong determination and iron resolve, and who is equipped with the *four means* to salvation (see page 58) can easily obtain the knowledge of the Self.

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥४॥

भूमिः earth, आपः water, अनलः fire, वायुः air, खम् ether, मनः mind, बुद्धिः intellect, एव even, च and, अहङ्कारः egoism, इति thus, इयम् this, मे My, भिन्ना divided, प्रकृतिः Nature, अष्टधा eightfold.

4. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism—thus is My Nature divided eightfold.

Commentary: This eightfold Nature constitutes the 'inferior Nature' or Apara Prakriti. The five gross elements are formed out of the Tanmatras or root-elements through the process of Panchikarana or fivefold mixing. Tanmatras are the subtle root-elements. In this verse, earth, water, etc., represent the subtle or rudimentary elements out of which the five gross elements are formed.

Mind stands here for its cause Ahamkara: intellect for its cause the Mahat: Ahamkara for the Avyaktam or the unmanifested (Mula-Prakriti) united with Avidya which is conjoined with all kinds of Vasanas or latent tendencies. As Ahamkara (I-ness) is the cause for all the actions of every individual and as Ahamkara is the most vital principle in man on which all the other Tattvas or principles depend, the Avyaktam combined with the Ahamkara is itself called here Ahamkara, just as food which is mixed with poison is itself called poison.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥५॥

अपरा lower, इयम् this, इतः from this, तु but, अन्याम् different, प्रकृतिम् nature, विद्धि know, मे My, पराम् higher, जीवभूताम् the very life-element, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, यया by which, इदम् this, धार्यते is upheld, जगत् world.

5. This is the inferior Prakriti, O mighty-armed (Arjuna); know thou as different from it My higher Prakriti (Nature), the very life-element, by which this world is upheld.

Commentary: The eightfold Nature described in the previous verse is the inferior Nature. It constitutes the Kshetra or the field or matter. It is impure. It generates evil and causes bondage. But the superior Nature is pure. It is My very Self, Kshetrajna (knower of the field or Spirit) by which life is sustained, and that which enters within the whole world and upholds it. It is the very life-element or the principle of Self-consciousness, by which this universe is sustained.

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥६॥

एतद्योनीनि those of which these two (Prakritis) are the womb, भूतानि beings, सर्वाणि all, इति thus, उपधारय know, अहम् I, कृत्स्नस्य of the whole, जगतः of the world, प्रभवः source, प्रलयः dissolution, तथा also.

6. Know that these two (Natures) are the womb of all beings. So I am the source and dissolution of the whole universe.

Commentary: These two Natures, the inferior and the superior, are the womb of all beings. As I am the source of these two Prakritis or Natures also, I am the cause of this universe. The whole universe originates from Me and dissolves in Me.

In the Brahma Sutras (chapter 1, section 1, aphorism 2) it is said, "*Janmadyasya yatah*" meaning that Brahman is that omniscient and omnipotent cause from which proceed the origin, subsistence and dissolution of this world.

Just as the mind is the material cause and also the seer (Drashta) for the objects seen in a dream, so also Isvara is the material cause of this world (Upadana-Karana) and also the seer (Drashta). He is also the efficient or the instrumental cause (Nimitta-Karana). (*Cf.* XIV. 3)

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥७॥

मत्तः than Me, परतरम् higher, न not, अन्यत् other, किञ्चित् anyone, अस्ति is, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya, मयि in Me, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, प्रोतम् is strung, सूत्रे on a string, मणिगणाः clusters of gems, इव like.

7. There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Arjuna. All this is strung on Me, as clusters of gems on a string.

Commentary: There is no other cause of the universe but Me. I alone am the cause of the universe. This illustration of gems and thread illustrates only the idea that all beings and the whole world are threaded on the Lord. The thread is not the cause of the gems. As Brahman is all in all there is nothing whatever higher than It.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥८॥

रसः sapidity, अहम् I, अप्सु in water, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya (son of Kunti), प्रभा light, अस्मि am (I), शशिसूर्ययोः in the moon and the sun, प्रणवः the syllable Om, सर्ववेदेषु in all the Vedas, शब्दः sound, खे in ether, पौरुषम् virility, नृषु in men.

8. I am the sapidity in water, O Arjuna; I am the light in the moon and the sun; I am the syllable Om in all the Vedas, sound in ether and virility in men.

Commentary: In Me all beings and the whole world are woven as a cloth in the warp. In Me as sapidity the water is woven; in Me as light, the sun and the moon are woven; in Me as the sacred syllable Om all the Vedas are woven; in Me as virility all men are woven.

The manifestations of the Lord are described in the verses 8, 9, 10 and 11. (*Cf.* XV. 12)

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥९॥

पुण्यः sweet, गन्धः fragrance, पृथिव्याम् in earth, च and, तेजः brilliance, च and, अस्मि am (I), विभावसौ in fire, जीवनम् life, सर्वभूतेषु in all beings, तपः austerity, च and, अस्मि am (I), तपस्विषु in ascetics.

9. I am the sweet fragrance in the earth and the brilliance in the fire, the life in all beings, and I am the austerity in ascetics.

Commentary: In Me as odour is the earth woven; in Me as brilliance is the fire woven; in Me as life all beings are woven; in Me as austerity all ascetics are woven. I am the support (Adhishthanam or Asraya) for everything.

I am the power or Sakti which helps the ascetics to control the mind and the senses.

Krishna says, "I am the agreeable odour." If Arjuna had asked Him, "Then who is the disagreeable odour?", He would have replied, "It is also I."

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥१०॥

बीजम् seed, माम् Me, सर्वभूतानाम् of all beings, विद्धि know, पार्थ O Partha, सनातनम् eternal, बुद्धिः intelligence, बुद्धिमताम् of the intelligent, अस्मि am (I), तेजः splendour, तेजस्विनाम् of the splendid, अहम् I.

10. Know Me, O Arjuna, as the eternal seed of all beings; I am the intelligence of the intelligent; the splendour of the splendid objects am I.

Commentary: *Seed* means 'cause'.

Tejas also means 'heroism' or 'bravery'.

Had Arjuna asked, "Who is the seed for Thee?", the Lord would have replied, "There is no seed for Me. There is no cause for Me. I am the source of everything. I am the causeless Cause. I am the primeval Being."

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥११॥

बलम् strength, बलवताम् of the strong, च and अहम् I, कामरागविवर्जितम् devoid of desire and attachment, धर्माविरुद्धः unopposed to Dharma, भूतेषु in beings, कामः desire, अस्मि am (I), भरतर्षभ O Lord of the Bharatas.

11. Of the strong, I am the strength devoid of desire and attachment, and in (all) beings, I am the desire unopposed to Dharma, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Kama:* Desire for those objects that come in contact with the senses.

Raga: attachment for those objects that come in contact with the senses.

I am that strength which is necessary for the bare sustenance of the body. I am not the strength which generates desire and attachment for sensual objects as in the case of worldly-minded persons. I am the desire which is in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures or the code prescribing the duties of life. I am the desire for moderate eating and drinking, etc., which are necessary for the sustenance of the body and which help one in the practice of Yoga.

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥१२॥

ये whatever, च and, एव even, सात्त्विकाः pure, भावाः natures, राजसाः active, तामसाः inert, च and, ये whatever, मत्तः from Me, एव even, इति thus, तान् them, विद्धि know, न not, तु indeed, अहम् I, तेषु in them, ते they, मयि in Me.

12. Whatever beings (and objects) that are pure, active and inert, know that they proceed from Me. They are in Me, yet I am not in them.

Commentary: This is a world of the three Gunas, viz., Sattva (purity), Rajas (passion) and Tamas (inertia). All sentient and insentient objects are the aggregate of these three qualities of Nature. One quality predominates in them and the predominant quality imparts to the object its distinctive character or definite properties.

In the gods, sages, milk and green gram, Sattva is predominant. In Gandharvas (a class of celestials), kings, warriors and chillies, Rajas is predominant. In demons, Sudras, garlic, onion and meat, Tamas is predominant.

Though these beings and objects proceed from Me, I am not in them; they are in Me. I am independent. I am the support for them; they depend on Me just as the superimposed snake depends on the rope. The snake is in the rope, but the rope is never in the snake. The waves belong to the ocean but the ocean does not belong to the waves. (*Cf.* IX. 4 and 6)

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

त्रिभिः by three, गुणमयैः composed of Gunas, भावैः by natures, एभिः by these, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, जगत् world, मोहितम् deluded, न not, अभिजानाति knows, माम् Me, एभ्यः from them, परम् higher, अव्ययम् immutable.

13. Deluded by these Natures (states or things) composed of the three qualities of Nature all this world does not know Me as distinct from them and immutable.

Commentary: Persons of this world are deluded by the three qualities of Nature or Maya. Affection, attachment and infatuated love are all modifications of these qualities. On account of delusion created by these three qualities they are not able to break the worldly ties and to turn the mind towards the Supreme Soul, the Lord of the three qualities.

Avyayam: Immutable or unchangeable or inexhaustible or imperishable. The Self is of one homogeneous essence. It has not got the six changes or modifications (Shad Bhava Vikaras) which the body has, viz., existence, birth, growth, modification, decay and death. (*Cf.* VII. 25)

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ।।१४।।

दैवी divine, हि verily, एषा this, गुणमयी made of Gunas, मम My, माया illusion, दुरत्यया difficult to cross over, माम् to Me, एव even, ये who, प्रपद्यन्ते take refuge, मायाम् illusion, एताम् this, तरन्ति cross over, ते they.

14. Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the (three) qualities (of Nature) is difficult to cross over; those who take refuge in Me alone, cross over this illusion.

Commentary: Maya is the Upadhi or the causal body (Karana Sarira) of Isvara. It is the material cause of this universe. It is inherent in the Lord. It is constituted of the three qualities, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Those who completely devote themselves to the Lord alone after renouncing all formal religion (Dharma) cross over this illusion which deludes all beings. They attain liberation or Moksha.

Isvara is the Lord of Maya (illusion). He has perfect control over it. Avidya is the Upadhi (limiting adjunct) of the Jiva (individual soul). The Jiva is a slave of this ignorance. Ignorance is the veil that has screened the Jiva from Satchidananda Brahman or the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. When the veil is removed by the dawn of knowledge of the Self the Jiva loses his character as a Jiva or an individual soul and becomes identical with Brahman. (*Cf.* XV. 3 and 4)

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ।।१५।।

न not, माम् to Me, दुष्कृतिनः evil-doers, मूढाः the deluded, प्रपद्यन्ते seek, नराधमाः the lowest of men, मायया by Maya, अपहृतज्ञानाः deprived of knowledge, आसुरम् belonging to demons, भावम् nature, आश्रिताः having taken to.

15. The evil-doers and the deluded who are the lowest of men do not seek Me; they whose knowledge is destroyed by illusion follow the ways of demons.

Commentary: These three kinds of people have no discrimination between right and wrong, the Real and the unreal. They commit murder, robbery, theft and other kinds of atrocious actions. They speak untruth and injure others in a variety of ways. Those who follow the ways of the demons take the body as the Self like Virochana and worship it with flowers, scents, unguents, nice clothes and palatable foods of various sorts. They are deluded souls. They try to nourish their body and do various sorts of evil actions to attain this end. Therefore they do not worship Me. Ignorance is the root cause of all these evils. (*Cf.* XVI. 16 and 20)

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ।।१६।।

चतुर्विधाः four kinds, भजन्ते worship, माम् Me, जनाः people, सुकृतिनः virtuous, अर्जुन O Arjuna, आर्तः the distressed, जिज्ञासुः the seeker of knowledge, अर्थार्थी the seeker of wealth, ज्ञानी the wise, च and, भरतर्षभ O lord of the Bharatas.

16. Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna, and they are the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the wise, O lord of the Bharatas.

Commentary: *The distressed* is he who is suffering from a chronic and incurable disease, he whose life is in jeopardy on account of earthquake, volcanic eruption, thunder, attack by a dacoit or enemy or tiger, etc. When Draupadi and Gajendra were in great distress they worshipped the Lord. These are the instances of *Aarta Bhakti.*

Jijnasu is the enquirer. He is dissatisfied with this world. There is a void in his life. He always feels that sensual pleasure is not the highest form of happiness and there is yet pure eternal bliss unmixed with grief and pain, which is to be found within. Janaka and Uddhava were devotees of this type.

Seeker of wealth is he who craves for money, wife, children, position, name and fame. Sugriva, Vibhishana, Upamanyu and Dhruva were all devotees of this type.

The wise are the men of knowledge who have attained to Self-illumination. Sukadeva was a Jnani-Bhakta.

Kamsa, Sishupala and Ravana thought of the Lord constantly on account of fear and hatred (Vaira-Bhakti). Hence they are also regarded as devotees.

Be devoted to God, whatever be your motive. Devotion will purify the motive in due course.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥१७॥

तेषाम् of them, ज्ञानी the wise, नित्ययुक्तः ever steadfast, एकभक्तिः whose devotion is to the One, विशिष्यते excels, प्रियः dear, हि verily, ज्ञानिनः of the wise, अत्यर्थम् exceedingly, अहम् I, सः he, च and, मम of Me, प्रियः dear.

17. Of them the wise, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels (is the best); for I am exceedingly dear to the wise and he is dear to Me.

Commentary: *Ekabhaktih* means unswerving, single-minded devotion to the Supreme Being.

The Jnani-Bhakta is beyond all cults or creeds or formal religion or rules of society. As the wise man is constantly harmonised and as he is devoted to the One, he is regarded as superior to all the other devotees. As I am his very Self or Antaratma, I am extremely dear to him. Everybody loves his own Self most. The Self is very dear to everybody. The wise man is My very Self and he is dear to Me also. (*Cf.* II. 49; IX. 29; XII. 14, 17 and 19)

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥१८॥

उदाराः noble, सर्वे all, एव surely, एते these, ज्ञानी the wise, तु but, आत्मा Self, एव very, मे My, मतम् opinion, आस्थितः is established, सः he, हि verily, युक्तात्मा steadfast-minded, माम् Me, एव verily, अनुत्तमाम् the supreme, गतिम् goal.

18. Noble indeed are all these; but I deem the wise man as My very Self; for, steadfast in mind he is established in Me alone as the supreme goal.

Commentary: Are not the other three kinds of devotees dear to the Lord? They are. They are all noble souls. But the wise man is exceedingly dear because he has a steady mind; he has fixed his mind on Brahman. He does not want any worldly object, but only the Supreme Being. He seeks Brahman alone as the supreme goal. He practises Ahamgraha Upasana (meditation on the Self as the all). He tries to realise that he is identical with the Supreme Self. Therefore I regard a wise man as My very Self. (*Cf.* II. 49)

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥१९॥

बहूनाम् of many, जन्मनाम् of births, अन्ते in the end, ज्ञानवान् the wise, माम् to Me, प्रपद्यते approaches, वासुदेवः Vaasudeva, सर्वम् all, इति thus, सः he, महात्मा the great soul, सुदुर्लभः (is) very hard to find.

19. At the end of many births the wise man comes to Me, realising that all this is Vaasudeva (the innermost Self); such a great soul (Mahatma) is very hard to find.

Commentary: *Vaasudeva* is a name of Lord Krishna as He is the son of Vasudeva. He is the all-pervading Brahman.

The aspirant gradually evolves through Yogic practices, selfless service, devotion and constant meditation in many births and ultimately attains the inner Self. He realises that all is Vaasudeva. It is very difficult to find such a great soul, who has attained to perfection. No one is equal to him. That is the reason why the Lord has said, "One in a thousand perchance strives for perfection; even among those successful strivers, only one perchance knows Me in essence." (*Cf.* VII. 3.)

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥२०॥

कामैः by desires, तैः तैः by this or that, हृतज्ञानाः those whose wisdom has been rent away, प्रपद्यन्ते approach, अन्यदेवताः other gods, तम् तम् this or that, नियमम् rite, आस्थाय having followed, प्रकृत्या by nature, नियताः led, स्वया by one's own.

20. Those whose wisdom has been rent away by this or that desire, go to other gods, following this or that rite, led by their own nature.

Commentary: Those who desire wealth, children, the (small) Siddhis, etc., are deprived of discrimination. They devote themselves to other minor gods such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, etc., impelled or driven by their own nature or Samskaras acquired in their previous births. They perform some kinds of rites to propitiate these lower deities. (*Cf.* IX. 23)

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥२१॥

यः who, यः who, याम् which, याम् which, तनुम् form, भक्तः devotee, श्रद्धया with faith, अर्चितुम् to worship, इच्छति desires, तस्य तस्य of him, अचलाम् unflinching, श्रद्धाम् faith, ताम् that, एव surely, विदधामि make, अहम् I.

21. Whatsoever form any devotee desires to worship with faith—that (same) faith of his I make firm and unflinching.

Commentary: *Tanu* or body is used here in the sense of a Devata (god).

The Lord, the indweller of all beings, makes the faith of that devotee who worships the lesser divinities, which is born of the Samskaras of his previous birth, steady and unswerving. (*Cf.* IV. 11; IX. 22 and 23)

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्या राधनमीहते।
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान् हि तान् ॥२२॥

सः he, तया with that, श्रद्धया with faith, युक्तः endowed, तस्याः of it, राधनम् worship, ईहते engages in, लभते obtains, च and, ततः from that, कामान् desires, मया by Me, एव surely, विहितान् ordained, हि verily, तान् those.

22. Endowed with that faith, he engages in the worship of that (form) and from it he obtains his desire, these being verily ordained by Me (alone).

Commentary: The last two words *Hi* and *Tan* are taken as one word, *Hitan* meaning 'benefits'. This is another interpretation. The devotee who worships the lesser gods attains the objects of his desire (minor psychic powers, etc.). Those objects are ordained by the Lord only as He alone knows exactly the relation between the actions and their results or rewards and as He is the Inner Ruler of all beings. Unwise or undiscriminating people only take recourse to the means of getting these finite rewards which can hardly give entire satisfaction. Pitiable indeed is their lot! They have no power of enquiry (Vichara-Sakti) or right understanding. They get hold of pieces of glass instead of attaining the jewel of the Self, of incalculable value.

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥२३॥

अन्तवत् finite, तु verily, फलम् the fruit, तेषाम् of them, तत् that, भवति is, अल्पमेधसाम् those of small intelligence, देवान् to the gods, देवयजः the worshippers of the gods, यान्ति go to, मद्भक्ताः My devotees, यान्ति go to, माम् Me, अपि also.

23. Verily the reward (fruit) that accrues to those men of small intelligence is finite. The worshippers of the gods go to them, but My devotees come to Me.

Commentary: The exertion in the two kinds is the same and yet people do not attempt to worship the Supreme Being in order to attain the maximum benefits or the infinite reward (liberation or Moksha). The reward obtained by men of small understanding and petty intellect who worship the minor deities is small, perishable and temporary.

Yajnas (Vedic rituals), Homas (rituals in which oblations are offered into the sacred fire) and Tapas (penance) of various sorts can bestow only temporary rewards on the performer. Liberation from the wheel of transmigration alone will give everlasting bliss and eternal peace.

Those who worship Indra and others are Sattvic devotees; those who worship Yakshas and Rakshasas (demoniacal beings) are Rajasic devotees; and those who worship the Bhutas and Pretas (discarnate spirits) are Tamasic devotees.

The knowledge of those who worship the small deities is partial and incomplete. It cannot lead to liberation. (*Cf.* IX. 25)

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥२४॥

अव्यक्तम् the unmanifested, व्यक्तिम् to manifestation, आपन्नम् come to, मन्यन्ते think, माम् me, अबुद्धयः the foolish, परम् the highest, भावम् nature, अजानन्तः not knowing, मम My, अव्ययम् immutable, अनुत्तमम् most excellent.

24. The foolish think of Me, the Unmanifest, as having manifestation, knowing not My higher, immutable and most excellent nature.

Commentary: The ignorant take Lord Krishna as a common mortal. They think that He has taken a body like orginary human beings from the unmanifested state on account of the force of Karma of the previous birth. They have no knowledge of His higher, imperishable and self-luminous nature as the Highest Self. They think that He has just now come into manifestation, though He is self-existent, eternal, beginningless, endless, birthless, deathless, changeless, infinite and unmanifest.

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥२५॥

न not, अहम् I, प्रकाशः manifest, सर्वस्य of all, योगमायासमावृतः veiled by Yoga-Maya, मूढः deluded, अयम् this, न not, अभिजानाति knows, लोकः world, माम् Me, अजम् unborn, अव्ययम् imperishable.

25. I am not manifest to all (as I am) veiled by the Yoga-Maya. This deluded world does not know Me, the unborn and imperishable.

Commentary: I am not manifest to all the people, but I am certainly manifest to the chosen few who are My devotees, who have taken sole refuge in Me alone. I am not visible to those who are deluded by the three Gunas and the pairs of opposites, and who are screened off by this universe which is a manifestation of the qualities of Nature, My Yoga-Maya or My creative illusion. This veils the understanding of the worldly-minded people. So they are not able to behold the Lord Who keeps Maya under His perfect control.

Yoga-Maya is the union of the three qualities of Nature. The illusion or veil spread thereby is called Yoga-Maya. The worldly people are deluded by the illusion born of the union of the three qualities. Therefore, they are not able to know the Lord Who is unborn and immutable.

This Yoga-Maya is under the perfect control of the Lord. Isvara is the wielder of Maya. Therefore it cannot obscure His own knowledge, just as the illusion created by the juggler cannot obstruct his own knowledge or deceive him. The illusion which binds the worldly people cannot in the least affect the Lord Who has kept Maya under his perfect subjugation. (*Cf.* VII. 13; IX. 5; X. 7; XI. 8)

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥२६॥

वेद know, अहम् I, समतीतानि the past, वर्तमानानि the present, च and, अर्जुन O Arjuna, भविष्याणि the future, च and, भूतानि beings, माम् Me, तु verily, वेद knows, न not, कश्चन any one.

26. I know, O Arjuna, the beings of the past, the present and the future, but no one knows Me.

Commentary: Persons who are deluded by the three qualities of Nature do not know the Lord. As they lack in the knowledge of His real nature, they do not adore Him. But the Lord knows through His omniscience the beings of the past, the present and the future. He who worships the Lord with single-minded devotion knows Him in essence. He has knowledge of His real nature.

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप ॥२७॥

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन arisen from desire and aversion, द्वन्द्वमोहेन by the delusion of the pairs of opposites, भारत O Bharata, सर्वभूतानि all beings, संमोहम् to delusion, सर्गे at birth, यान्ति are subject, परन्तप O Parantapa (scorcher of the foes).

27. By the delusion of the pairs of opposites arising from desire and aversion, O Bharata, all beings are subject to delusion at birth, O Parantapa.

Commentary: Where there is pleasure there is Raga or attachment; where there is pain there is Dvesha or aversion. There is the instinct in man to preserve his body. Man wishes to attain those objects which help the preservation of the body. He wishes to get rid of those objects which give pain to the body and the mind. On account of delusion caused by the pairs of opposites, desire and aversion spring up and man cannot get the knowledge of the things as they are, even of this external universe of sense-experience; and it needs no saying that in a man whose intellect is overwhelmed by desire and aversion there cannot arise the transcendental knowledge of the innermost Self.

Raga (attraction) and Dvesha (repulsion), pleasure and pain, heat and cold, happiness and misery, joy and sorrow, success and failure, censure and praise, honour and dishonour are the Dvandvas or the pairs of opposites. Desire and aversion (or attraction and repulsion) induce delusion in all beings and serve as obstacles to the dawn of the knowledge of the Self.

He whose intellect is obscured by the delusion caused by the pairs of opposites is not able to realise "I am the Self." Therefore he does not adore Me as the Self.

He who is a victim of Raga-Dvesha loses the power of discrimination. He wishes that pleasant objects should last for ever and that disagreeable or unpleasant objects should disappear immediately. How could this be? Objects that are conditioned in time, space and causation will perish. That which is agreeable and pleasant now will become disagreeable and unpleasant after some time. The mind is ever fluctuating. It demands variety and gets disgusted with monotony.

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥२८॥

येषाम् of whom, तु but, अन्तगतम् is at the end, पापम् sin, जनानाम् of men, पुण्यकर्मणाम् of men of virtuous deeds, ते they, द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ताः freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, भजन्ते worship, माम् Me, दृढव्रताः men steadfast in vows.

28. But those men of virtuous deeds whose sins have come to an end, and who are freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, worship Me, steadfast in their vows.

Commentary: By the performance of good deeds the heart is slowly purified; Sattva increases; Rajas and Tamas are gradually thinned out. The mind becomes serene and calm. The little self-arrogating personality slowly dies. You grow in spirituality. The divine flame becomes brighter and brighter. You become impersonal.

Sin: To forget one's identity with the Supreme Soul is the greatest sin. To see difference is sin. To take the body as the Self, to believe that this world is real is sin. Selfishness is sin. Egoism is sin. Ignorance is sin.

Steadfast in vows: The man steadfast in vows entertains a firm resolve: "I must realise the Self now; I will not budge an inch from my seat till I attain Self-realisation." He has the firm conviction that "Brahman is the only Reality. This world is unreal. It is like a mirage. I can attain immortality and eternal bliss if I realise the Self only. There is not an iota of happiness in the sensual objects." Therefore the Lord says, "Those persons of pure deeds worship Me steadfast in vows."

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ।।२९।।

जरामरणमोक्षाय for liberation from old age and death, माम् Me, आश्रित्य having taken refuge in, यतन्ति strive, ये who, ते they, ब्रह्म Brahman, तत् that, विदुः know, कृत्स्नम् the whole, अध्यात्मम् knowledge of the Self, कर्म action, च and, अखिलम् whole.

29. Those who strive for liberation from old age and death, taking refuge in Me, realise in full *that* Brahman, the whole knowledge of the Self and all action.

Commentary: They attain to the full knowledge of the Self or perfect knowledge of Brahman. They attain to the Bhuma or the Highest or the Unconditioned. All their doubts are totally destroyed. They fully realise now, "All is Vaasudeva. All indeed is Brahman. There is no such thing as diversity."

They are not reborn here and have thus conquered old age and death. They are liberated here and now.

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ।।३०।।

साधिभूताधिदैवम् with the Adhibhuta and the Adhidaiva together, माम् Me, साधियज्ञम् with the Adhiyajna, च and, ये who, विदुः know, प्रयाणकाले at the time of death, अपि even, च and, माम् Me, ते they, विदुः know, युक्तचेतसः steadfast in mind.

30. Those who know Me with the Adhibhuta (pertaining to the elements), Adhidaiva (pertaining to the gods) and the Adhiyajna (pertaining to the sacrifice) know Me even at the time of death, steadfast in mind.

Commentary: They who are steadfast in mind, who have taken refuge in Me, who know Me as the knowledge of elements in the physical plane, as the knowledge of the gods in the celestial or mental plane, as the knowledge of the sacrifice in the realm of sacrifice, are not affected by death. They do not lose their memory. They continue to keep up the consciousness of Me even at the time of their departure from this world. Those who worship Me along with these three know Me even at the time of death. (*Cf.* VIII. 25)

(This chapter is known by the names Vijnana Yoga and Jnana Yoga also.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventh discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Wisdom and Realisation.

अथ अष्टमोऽध्यायः

EIGHTH DISCOURSE

अक्षरब्रह्मयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN

अर्जुन उवाच

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥१॥

किम् what, तत् that, ब्रह्म Brahman, किम् what, अध्यात्मम् Adhyatma, किम् what, कर्म action, पुरुषोत्तम O best among men, अधिभूतम् Adhibhuta, च and, किम् what, प्रोक्तम् declared, अधिदैवम् Adhidaiva, किम् what, उच्यते is called.

Arjuna said:

1. What is that Brahman? What is Adhyatma? What is action, O best among men? What is declared to be Adhibhuta? And, what is Adhidaiva said to be?

Commentary: In the last two verses of the seventh chapter Lord Krishna had used certain philosophical and technical terms such as Adhyatma, Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva and Adhiyajna. Arjuna does not understand the meaning of these terms. So he proceeds to ask the Lord the above questions for their elucidation. Lord Krishna gives the answers succinctly to the above questions in their order.

Some treat this chapter as *Abhyasa Yoga* because in this chapter verses 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 14 deal with spiritual practices. Verse 7 treats of Karma and Bhakti Yoga combined (giving the hands to the service of humanity or society and fixing the mind on the Lord). Verse 8 deals with Abhyasa Yoga. Verses 10, 12, and 13 treat of Hatha Yoga (how to raise the life-force to the Ajna Chakra and the Sahasrara and the Brahmarandhra). Verse 14 treats of the easy Yoga of constant

Namasmarana or remembering the names of the Lord constantly. This alone will help the spiritual aspirant to approach the Lord easily.

The nature of Brahman, the individual Self (*Adhyatma*), the nature of action, the nature of the objective universe or phenomena (*Adhibhuta*), knowledge of the shining ones (*Adhidaiva*), and the secret of sacrifice (*Adhiyajna*) are described in this discourse. The perfect sage will have perfect knowledge. He will have perfect knowledge of not only the manifested Brahman but also of the transcendental Brahman and the *why* of the universe, etc.

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥२॥

अधियज्ञः Adhiyajna, कथम् how, कः who, अत्र here, देहे in body, अस्मिन् this, मधुसूदन O Madhusudana, प्रयाणकाले at the time of death, च and, कथम् how, ज्ञेयः knowable, असि art, नियतात्मभिः by the self-controlled.

2. Who and how is Adhiyajna here in this body, O destroyer of Madhu (Krishna)? And how at the time of death, art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?

Commentary: Arjuna put seven questions to the Lord:

1. What is that Brahman? Is it Brahman with the Upadhis (limiting adjuncts) or Brahman without them?

2. Is it the aggregate of the senses or individual consciousness (Pratyak-Chaitanya) or distinct, pure consciousness?

3. What is Karma? Is it Yajna? Or, is it distinct from Yajna?

4. Adhibhuta is knowledge of the Bhutas. Is this the knowledge of the elements or something else?

5. Adhidaiva is that which is associated with the gods. Is this the meditation on the gods? Or, is it the consciousness associated with the Suryamandala, etc.?

6. Adhiyajna is that which is associated with Yajnas or Vedic rituals. Is this the Para Brahman (Supreme Being) or any special god? Is it of the same form (Tadatmyarupa) or is it entirely non-different (Abheda)? Does it exist in the body or

outside it? If it exists in the body, is it the intellect (Buddhi) or distinct from it?

7. At the time of death, when the memory is lost and when the senses become cold (i.e., when they lose their vitality) how can the man of one-pointedness and of steadfast mind know the Lord?

O Lord Madhusudana! Thou art all-merciful. Thou hast killed Madhu and removed the miseries of the people. Even so Thou canst remove my difficulties and doubts very easily. This is nothing for Thee, the omniscient Lord. (This is the reason why Arjuna addresses the Lord by the name *Madhusudana*.)

श्री भगवानुवाच

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥३॥

अक्षरम् imperishable, ब्रह्म Brahman, परमम् Supreme, स्वभावः (His) Nature, अध्यात्मम् Self-knowledge, उच्यते is called, भूतभावोद्भवकरः that which causes the origin and growth of beings, विसर्गः offering (to gods), कर्मसंज्ञितः is called action.

The Blessed Lord said:

3. Brahman is the Imperishable, the Supreme; Its essential nature is called Self-knowledge; the offering (to the gods) which causes existence and manifestation of beings and which also sustains them is called action.

Commentary: Brahman is imperishable, immutable, eternal, self-existent, self-luminous, unchanging and all-pervading. It is the source, root and womb of everything. In It all beings that are manifested live, move and have their very being. Hence, It is Paramaṃ, the Supreme and *Akshara*.

Its essential nature or *Svabhava* is *Adhyatma*. Brahman's dwelling in each individual body as the innermost Self (the Pratyagatma) is called Adhyatma. Yajnavalkya (a great sage of the Upanishadic period) said: "O Gargi! Heaven and earth stand upheld in their places. The Brahmanas call this (Brahman) the Akshara (the imperishable). It is neither red nor white; It is not shadow, not darkness, not air, not ether, without adhesion, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light, without breath, without a mouth or door, without measures, having nothing within and nothing outside It. It does not consume anything, nor does anyone consume It." Akshara is the Supreme Brahman only.

Akshara here does not mean the holy word Om, or the Avyakta (the unmanifested source of all that is in Nature). There is Laya (absorption) for Om. There is destruction for the unmanifested Nature also. Therefore Brahman is the Akshara, the Imperishable, the Supreme Being.

Offering: All virtuous work.

The sacrificial act which consists of offering cooked rice, cakes, etc., to the gods and which causes the genesis and support of beings is called Karma. The oblations in the sacrifice assume a subtle form and reach the sphere of the sun. Through the sun there is rain, and various sorts of grains, vegetables and fruits crop up. The living beings (Bhutas) live and develop on account of rice and other foodstuffs. Therefore Yajnas are the cause of the genesis and support of all beings.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥४॥

अधिभूतम् Adhibhuta, क्षरः perishable, भावः nature, पुरुषः the soul, च and, अधिदैवतम् Adhidaivata, अधियज्ञः Adhiyajna, अहम् I, एव alone, अत्र here, देहे in the body, देहभृताम् of the embodied, वर O best.

4. Adhibhuta (knowledge of the elements) pertains to My perishable Nature and the Purusha or the Soul is the Adhidaiva; I alone am the Adhiyajna here in this body, O best among the embodied (men).

Commentary: *Adhibhuta:* the perishable nature; the changing universe of the five elements with all its objects; all the material objects; everything that has birth; the changing world of names and forms.

Adhidaiva: Purusha literally means 'that by which everything is filled' (*pur 'to fill'*). It may also mean 'that which lies in this body'. It is Hiranyagarbha or the universal soul or the sustainer from whom all living beings derive their sense-power. It is the witnessing consciousness.

Adhiyajna: Consciousness; the presiding deity of sacrifice. The Lord of all works and sacrifice is Vishnu. Lord Vishnu identifies Himself with all sacrificial acts. "Yajna is verily Vishnu," says the Taittiriya Samhita of the Veda. Lord Krishna says, "I am the presiding deity in all acts of sacrifice in the body." All sacrifices are done by the body and so it may be said that they rest in the body.

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ।।५।।

अन्तकाले at the time of death, च and, माम् Me, एव only, स्मरन् remembering, मुक्त्वा leaving, कलेवरम् the body, यः who, प्रयाति goes forth, सः he, मद्भावम् My Being, याति attains, नास्ति not, अत्र here, संशयः doubt.

5. And whosoever, leaving the body, goes forth remembering Me alone, at the time of death, he attains My Being; there is no doubt about this.

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ।।६।।

यम् which, यम् which, वा or, अपि even, स्मरन् remembering, भावम् nature (idea of object), त्यजति leaves, अन्ते in the end, कलेवरम् the body, तम् to that, तम् to that, एव only, एति goes, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, सदा constantly, तद्भावभावितः thinking of that object.

6. Whosoever at the end leaves the body, thinking of any being, to that being only does he go, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), because of his constant thought of that being.

Commentary: The last thoughts determine the next birth. The most prominent thought of one's life occupies the mind at the time of death. The predominant idea at the time of death is what in normal life has occupied his attention most. The last thought determines the nature or character of the body to be attained next. As a man thinketh, so shall he becometh.

The force of Samskaras which one has created by his previous practice is the cause of their remembrance at death. Those who have practised worship of God throughout their life can have remembrance of their tutelary deity at the time of death.

The analogy of the wasp and the caterpillar (Bhramara-Kita-Nyaya) can be applied here. The caterpillar constantly remembers the wasp and becomes eventually transformed into a wasp. Even so he who constantly remembers his tutelary deity becomes identical with that deity. Nandikesvara is an example. He constantly thought of his Lord and assumed a form equal to that of the Lord.

If you constantly think of the immortal Self during your lifetime, you will entertain the thought of the Self only even at the time of death and will attain immortality. If you always think of your body and identify yourself with the perishable body you will be born again and again. If you think of your pet dog at the time of death you will be born as a dog. Raja Jadabharata thought of his pet deer at the time of his death and so he took the birth of a deer.

Every man has a definite outlook on life, definite mode of thinking, definite cravings, desires and hopes, definite character, temperament, taste, disposition and attitude. This is all due to the impressions which have become part and parcel of his subconsciousness. This is all due to experiences which have left their indelible impressions on his mind.

He always thinks of his body and physical needs. He searches for his happiness in the external, perishable objects. He identifies himself with the perishable body. He ignores his innermost, all-blissful, immortal Self, the source of everything. He trains his body, senses, mind and intellect in worldly pursuits. He ignores the Yogic discipline of the mind and the senses. Therefore he always thinks of his body, bread, drink and clothing. He forgets all about God and the Self, the indweller, an embodiment of bliss and knowledge, fountain of joy and happiness.

Desires are endless. Therefore man cannot gratify them in one birth. At the time of death the whole storehouse of impressions and desires is churned out and the most prominent, the strongest and cherished desire comes to the surface of the mind or the field of mental consciousness. This churned up butter or cream (cherished desire) arrests his attention for immediate gratification. He thinks of only that at the time of death. Just as the most vital mango plant shoots up prominently in the nursery, so also the strongest desire shoots up on the surface of the mind. If the desire is not gratified his mind gets saturated with it and it is gratified in his next birth. This desire will become very prominent in his next birth.

You yourself are the author of your own destiny. You yourself are responsible for your thoughts, character, feelings, actions and experiences. You planted certain worldly desires and Samskaras in your subconscious mind, and allowed them to germinate and grow. If you had planted spiritual aspiration, the desire for liberation and spiritual Samskaras, you would reap the fruit of immortality and eternal bliss. As you sow so shall you reap.

He who practises constant and profound meditation on the Self or his own tutelary deity throughout his life will be able to meet death with an unruffled mind. He alone would go to the Supreme, thinking of It at the time of his departure from this world, too. You should have exclusive devotion to God. Your whole mind must be absorbed in Him. You should not allow any outside worldly impressions, wherein there is an iota of selfish desire, to sink into your subconscious mind. Then you can think of the Lord exclusively at the time of death and enter His very Being.

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥७॥

तस्मात् therefore, सर्वेषु in all, कालेषु (in) times, माम् Me, अनुस्मर remember, युध्य fight, च and, मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः with mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed) in Me, माम् to Me, एव alone, एष्यसि (thou) shalt come to, असंशयम् doubtless.

7. Therefore at all times remember Me only and fight. With mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed) in Me, thou shalt doubtlessly come to Me alone.

Commentary: The whole mental machinery should be dedicated to the Lord. You must work with the mind and intellect devoted to Him.

Fight: Perform your own Dharma, the duty of a Kshatriya. It will purify your heart and you will attain to knowledge and come to Me. The term *fight* is Upalakshana (suggestive). It means: "Do your duties according to your caste and order of life." Varnashrama-Dharmas (the duties pertaining to the various castes and orders of life) and Nitya-Naimittika Karmas *(see page 111)* are the Upalakshanas (factors suggested or alluded to).

The Chitta-Vritti which is of the form of the object meditated upon is the Bhavana. (Chitta-Vritti is mental modification). The Bhavana is for those who practise Saguna Upasana. Bhavana at the time of separation of the body is not necessary for a sage or a Jnani who has attained to the knowledge of the Self or Self-realisation. (*Cf.* IX. 34; XII. 8, 11)

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥८॥

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन (with the mind made) steadfast by the method of habitual meditation, चेतसा with the mind, न not, अन्यगामिना moving towards any other thing, परमम् Supreme, पुरुषम् Purusha, दिव्यम् the resplendent, याति goes, पार्थ O Partha, अनुचिन्तयन् meditating.

8. With the mind not moving towards any other thing, made steadfast by the method of habitual meditation, and constantly meditating, one goes to the Supreme Person, the Resplendent, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Abhyasa* means practice. Practice is the constant repetition of one idea of God. In the practice of meditation Vijatiya Vrittis (worldly thoughts or thoughts of a type different from the object of meditation) are shut out and there is Sajatiya Vrittipravaha (continuous flow of thoughts of the Self or the Absolute alone). This is Abhyasa. Abhyasa is

Yoga. This will terminate in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The Yogi with Samahita Chitta (equanimity of mind) attains Paramatman or the Supreme Soul. Just as the rivers abandoning their names and forms become one with the ocean, so also the sage or the Vidvan, being liberated from names and forms, and virtue and vice, becomes identical with the Supreme Self.

The most vital factor in this practice is regularity. Be regular in your meditation. You will soon reach the goal.

Purusham Divyam: The resplendent, transcendental Being or the Inner Ruler (Antaryamin) in the solar orb.

He who meditates constantly without allowing the mind to wander among the sensual objects, in accordance with the instructions of the scriptures and the preceptor reaches the Supreme Purusha.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितार-
    मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप-
    मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥९॥

कविम् Omniscient, पुराणम् Ancient, अनुशासितारम् the Ruler (of the whole world), अणोः than atom, अणीयांसम् minuter, अनुस्मरेत् remembers, यः who, सर्वस्य of all, धातारम् supporter, अचिन्त्यरूपम् one whose form is inconceivable, आदित्यवर्णम् effulgent like the sun, तमसः from the darkness (of ignorance), परस्तात् beyond.

9. Whosoever meditates on the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler (of the whole world), minuter than an atom, the supporter of all, of inconceivable form, effulgent like the sun and beyond the darkness of ignorance.

Commentary: *Kavim:* The sage, seer or poet, the omniscient.

The Lord dispenses the fruits of actions of the Jivas (individual souls). He is the Ruler of the world. It is very difficult to conceive the form of the Lord. He is self-luminous and He illumines everything like the sun.

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन
भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्
स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥१०॥

प्रयाणकाले at the time of death, मनसा with mind, अचलेन unshaken, भक्त्या with devotion, युक्तः joined, योगबलेन by the power of Yoga, च and, एव only, भ्रुवोः of the two eyebrows, मध्ये in the middle, प्राणम् Prana (breath), आवेश्य having placed, सम्यक् thoroughly, सः he, तम् that, परम् Supreme, पुरुषम् Purusha, उपैति reaches, दिव्यम् resplendent.

10. At the time of death, with unshaken mind, endowed with devotion, by the power of Yoga, fixing the whole life-breath in the middle of the two eyebrows, he reaches that resplendent Supreme Person.

Commentary: The Yogi gets immense inner strength and power of concentration. His mind becomes quite steady through constant practice of concentration and meditation. He practises concentration first on the lower Chakras, viz., Muladhara, Svadhishthana and Manipura. He then concentrates on the lotus of the heart (Anahata Chakra). Then he takes the life-breath (Prana) through the Sushumna and fixes it in the middle of the two eyebrows. He eventually attains the resplendent Supreme Purusha (Person) by the above Yogic practice.

This is possible for one who has devoted his whole life to the practice of Yoga.

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति
विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति
तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥११॥

यत् which, अक्षरम् imperishable, वेदविदः knowers of the Vedas, वदन्ति declare, विशन्ति enter, यत् which, यतयः the self-controlled (ascetics or Sannyasins), वीतरागाः freed from attachment, यत्

which, इच्छन्तः desiring, ब्रह्मचर्यम् celibacy, चरन्ति practise, तत् that, ते to thee, पदम् goal, संग्रहेण in brief, प्रवक्ष्ये (I) will declare.

11. That which is declared Imperishable by those who know the Vedas, that which the self-controlled (ascetics or Sannyasins) and passion-free enter, that desiring which celibacy is practised—that goal I will declare to thee in brief.

Commentary: The Supreme Being which is symbolised by the sacred monosyllable Om or the Pranava is the highest step or the supreme goal of man.

The same ideas are expressed in the Kathopanishad. Yama (the God of Death) said to Nachiketas, "The goal which all the Vedas speak of, which all penances proclaim and wishing for which they lead the life of celibacy, that goal (world) I will briefly tell thee. It is Om." Satyakama the son of Sibi questioned Pippalada, "O Bhagavan, if some one among men meditates here until death on the syllable Om, what world does he obtain by that?" Pippalada replied, "O Satyakama, the syllable Om is indeed the higher and the lower Brahman. He who meditates on the higher Purusha with this syllable Om of three Matras (units) is led up by the Sama-verses to the Brahmaloka or the world of Brahma." (Prasnopanishad)

Pranava or Om is considered either as an expression of the Supreme Self or Its symbol like an idol (Pratika). It serves persons of dull and middling intellects as a means for realising the Supreme Self.

Chant Om three times at the commencement of your meditation; you will find concentration of mind easier.

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।
मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥१२॥

सर्वद्वाराणि all gates, संयम्य having controlled, मनः mind, हृदि in the heart, निरुध्य having confined, च and, मूर्ध्नि in the head, आधाय having placed, आत्मनः of the self, प्राणम् breath, आस्थितः established (in), योगधारणाम् practice of concentration.

12. Having closed all the gates, confined the mind in the heart and fixed the life-breath in the head, engaged in the practice of concentration,

Commentary: *The gates* are the senses of knowledge. *Closing the gates* means control of all senses by the practice of Pratyahara or withdrawal of the consciousness from them. Even if the senses are controlled, the mind will be dwelling on the sensual objects. Therefore the mind is confined or fixed in the lotus of the heart and thereby all the thoughts or mental modifications are also controlled. The whole life-breath is now taken up and fixed at the crown of the head (Brahmarandhra or the hole of Brahman).

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥१३॥

ॐ Om, इति thus, एकाक्षरम् one-syllabled, ब्रह्म Brahman, व्याहरन् uttering, माम् Me, अनुस्मरन् remembering, यः who, प्रयाति departs, त्यजन् leaving, देहम् the body, सः he, याति attains, परमाम् supreme, गतिम् goal.

13. Uttering the one-syllabled Om—the Brahman—and remembering Me, he who departs, leaving the body, attains to the Supreme Goal.

Commentary: Having controlled the thoughts the Yogi ascends by the Sushumna, the Nadi (subtle psychic nerve-channel) which passes upwards from the heart. He fixes his whole Prana or life-breath in the crown of the head in the Brahmarandhra or the hole of Brahman. He utters the sacred monosyllable Om, meditates on Me and leaves the body.

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥१४॥

अनन्यचेताः with the mind not thinking of any other object, सततम् constantly, यः who, माम् Me, स्मरति remembers, नित्यशः daily, तस्य of him, अहम् I, सुलभः easily attainable, पार्थ O Partha, नित्ययुक्तस्य ever-steadfast, योगिनः of Yogi.

14. I am easily attainable by that ever-steadfast Yogi who constantly and daily remembers Me (for a long time), not thinking of anything else (with a single mind or one-pointed mind), O Partha (Arjuna).

Commentary: Constantly remembering the Lord throughout the life is the most easy way of attaining Him.

Ananyachetah: He has no attachment for any other object. He will not think of any other object save his Ishta-Devata or tutelary deity.

Nityasah: For a long time, i.e., till the end of life.

He who remembers the Lord by fits and starts or he who remembers Him for six months and then leaves the practice and then again remembers Him for six months and so on cannot attain Him. (*Cf.* IX. 22, 34)

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥१५॥

माम् to Me, उपेत्य having attained, पुनर्जन्म rebirth, दुःखालयम् the place of pain, अशाश्वतम् non-eternal, न not, आप्नुवन्ति get, महात्मानः Mahatmas or the great souls, संसिद्धिम् to perfection, परमाम् highest, गताः having reached.

15. Having attained Me these great souls do not again take birth (here) which is the place of pain and is non-eternal: they have reached the highest perfection (liberation).

Commentary: Birth is the home of pain or seat of sorrow arising from the body. Study the Garbhopanishad. There the nature of pain, i.e., how the child is confined in the womb, and how it is pressed during its passage along the vaginal canal and the neck of the womb or uterus, is described. Further it is much affected by the Prasuti-Vayu (the vital air which is responsible for the delivery of the child).

Mahatmas (great souls) are free from Rajas and Tamas.

Having attained Me: This denotes Krama-Mukti or gradual liberation. The devotees who pass along the Devayana through the force of their Upasana, attain to Brahmaloka (the world of Brahma the Creator) or Satyaloka (the world of truth, the highest of the seven worlds) and there enjoy all the divine wealth and glory of the Lord and then attain to Kaivalya Moksha (final liberation) through the knowledge of Brahman, along with Brahma during the cosmic dissolution.

Mahatmas or great souls who have attained Moksha do not come again to birth. Those who have not attained Me, take birth again in this world.

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥१६॥

आब्रह्मभुवनात् up to the world of Brahma, लोकाः worlds, पुनरावर्तिनः subject to return, अर्जुन O Arjuna, माम् Me, उपेत्य having attained, तु but, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, पुनर्जन्म rebirth, न not, विद्यते is.

16. (All) the worlds including the world of Brahma are subject to return again, O Arjuna; but he who reaches Me, O son of Kunti, has no rebirth.

Commentary: Those devotees who practise Daharopasana (a kind of meditation on the mystic 'space' in the heart) and other devotees who reach Brahmaloka through the path of the gods (Devayana) and attain gradual liberation (Krama-Mukti) will not return again to this world. But those who reach Brahmaloka through the practice of the Panchagni Vidya (a ritual) will enjoy life in Brahmaloka and come back to this world.

All the worlds are subjected to return because they are limited or conditioned by time.

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥१७॥

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम् ending in a thousand Yugas (ages), अहः day, यत् which, ब्रह्मणः of Brahma, विदुः know, रात्रिम् the night, युगसहस्रान्ताम् ending in a thousand Yugas (ages), ते they, अहोरात्रविदः knowers of day and night, जनाः people.

17. Those people who know the day of Brahma which is of a duration of a thousand Yugas (ages) and the night which is also of a thousand Yugas' duration, they know day and night.

Commentary: *Day* means evolution or projection or manifestation of the universe. *Night* means involution of the universe or Pralaya. The worlds are limited or conditioned in time. Therefore they return again. The world of Brahma (Brahmaloka or Satyaloka) is also transient, although it lasts for a thousand ages. When the four great Yugas have gone round a thousand times, it makes a daytime of Brahma and when an equal number of Yugas pass again it makes a night. Those who can see and live through the day and night of Brahma can really know what is a day and what is a night.

The Suryasiddhanta speaks of the same division of time.

According to it:

		Years
Kaliyuga (with its Sandhya and Sandhyamsa) consists of		432,000
Dvapara Yuga	(do)	864,000
Tretayuga	(do)	1,296,000
Kritayuga	(do)	1,728,000
Thus a Mahayuga consisting of these four Yugas comprises		4,320,000
71 such Mahayugas with an additional Sandhya, at the close of 1,728,000 years make one Manvantara of		308,448,000
14 such Manvantaras with another Sandhya, at the close of 1,728,000 years constitute one Kalpa of		4,320,000,000
Two Kalpas make a day and night of Brahma of		8,640,000,000
360 such days and nights make one year of Brahma consisting of		3,110,400,000,000
100 such years constitute His lifetime of		311,040,000,000,000

The world is absorbed in the Avyakta or the Unmanifested or Mulaprakriti during the cosmic Pralaya (involution of the world). Just as the tree remains in a latent state in the seed, so also this whole universe remains in a latent state in a seed-form in the Mulaprakriti during Pralaya. This is the night of Brahma. This is the cosmic night. Again the world is projected at the beginning of the Mahakalpa (evolution). There comes the cosmic dawn or cosmic day. This eternal rhythm of cosmic day and night (evolution and involution) is kept up in the macrocosm.

Nothing that comes under this ever-revolving wheel of cosmic day and night lasts for ever. That is the reason why the seers of the Upanishads, the sages of yore, lived in the transcendental Supreme being, the imperishable Self, the indestructible Purusha, the supreme goal of life, the highest end of man, which is beyond the cosmic day and night. Just as the seeds that are fried can hardly germinate, so also those who have attained to the imperishable Brahman, the Absolute, the Eternal, cannot return to this world of sorrow, pain and misery. They know neither day nor night. They are one with Existence Absolute.

The manifested and the unmanifested dwell in Brahman. Brahman is beyond the manifested and the unmanifested. When the world and the body are destroyed Brahman is not destroyed. The waves come out and subside, but the ocean remains unaffected. So also the worlds come and subside, but Brahman the source of everything, the source of Mulaprakriti, ever remains unaffected. Just as ornaments come out of gold and then go back to gold when they are melted, so also all the worlds come out of Brahman and go back to Brahman. Gold is in no way affected by the various forms such as earrings, bracelets, anklets, etc., that have been made of it. Even so Brahman is not in the least affected by the projection and destruction (dissolution) of the worlds and the bodies of beings. It remains always as It is.

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ।।१८।।

अव्यक्तात् from the Unmanifested, व्यक्तयः the manifested, सर्वाः all, प्रभवन्ति proceed, अहरागमे at the coming of day, रात्र्यागमे at the coming of night, प्रलीयन्ते dissolve, तत्र there, एव verily, अव्यक्तसंज्ञके in that which is called the Unmanifested.

18. From the Unmanifested all the manifested (worlds) proceed at the coming of the 'day'; at the coming of the 'night' they dissolve verily into *that* alone which is called the Unmanifested.

Commentary: When Brahma awakes, all manifestations, moving and unmoving (animate and inanimate) stream forth at the coming of the 'day' from the Avyakta or the Unmanifested. When Brahma goes to sleep, all the manifestations merge in the Unmanifested, for the cosmic night has set in.

Coming of the day: Commencement of creation.

Coming of the night: Commencement of dissolution. (*Cf.* IX. 7 and 8)

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ।।१९।।

भूतग्रामः multitude of beings, सः that, एव verily, अयम् this, भूत्वा भूत्वा being born again and again, प्रलीयते dissolves, रात्र्यागमे at the coming of night, अवशः helpless, पार्थ O Partha, प्रभवति comes forth, अहरागमे at the coming of day.

19. This same multitude of beings, being born again and again, is dissolved, helplessly, O Arjuna, (into the Unmanifested) at the coming of the night and comes forth at the coming of the day.

Commentary: Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire) and Karma (action) are the three knots that bind the individual to Samsara. Desire is born of Avidya. Man exerts to attain and enjoy the objects of his desires. During this activity he favours some and injures others through the force of Raga-Dvesha (love and hatred or attraction and repulsion). Therefore he is caught in the wheel of Samsara or transmigration. He has to take birth again and again to reap the fruits of his own actions. He repeatedly comes forth and dissolves through the force of his own Karma.

The individual souls have lost their independence as they are bound by ignorance, desire and activity. Therefore they are subject to the sorrows, miseries and pains of this Samsara. In order to create dispassion in their minds and a longing for liberation in their hearts, and to remove the fallacious belief that a man reaps the fruits of what he has not done or that he does not reap the fruits of what he has done, the Lord has said that all creatures involuntarily come into being again and again at the coming of the day and dissolve at the coming of the night (on account of the actions or Karmas caused by desire born of ignorance).

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥२०॥

परः higher, तस्मात् than that, तु but, भावः existence, अन्यः another, अव्यक्तः unmanifested, अव्यक्तात् than the unmanifested, सनातनः Eternal, यः who, सः that, सर्वेषु all, भूतेषु beings, नश्यत्सु when destroyed, न not, विनश्यति is destroyed.

20. But verily there exists, higher than this Unmanifested, another unmanifested Eternal, which is not destroyed when all beings are destroyed.

Commentary: Another unmanifested is the ancient or eternal Para Brahman Who is distinct from the Unmanifested (Avyakta or Primordial Nature), Who is of quite a different nature. It is superior to Hiranyagarbha (the Cosmic Creative Intelligence) and the Unmanifested Nature because It is their cause. It is not destroyed when all the beings from Brahma down to the ants or the blade of grass are destroyed. (*Cf.* XV. 17)

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥२१॥

अव्यक्तः unmanifested, अक्षरः imperishable, इति thus, उक्तः called, तम् That, आहुः (they) say, परमाम् the highest, गतिम् goal (path), यम् which, प्राप्य having reached, न not, निवर्तन्ते return, तत् that, धाम abode (place or state), परमम् highest, मम My.

21. What is called the Unmanifested and the Imperishable, That they say is the highest goal. They who reach It do not return (to this Samsara). That is My highest abode (place or state).

Commentary: Para Brahman is called the Unmanifested because It cannot be perceived by the senses. It is called the Imperishable also. It is all-pervading, all-permeating and interpenetrating. Para Brahman is the highest Goal. There is nothing higher than It. This is the true non-dual state free from all sorts of limiting adjuncts. The attainment of Brahmaloka (the region of the Creator) etc., is inferior to this. Only by realising the Self is one liberated from Samsara. (*Cf.* XII. 3, XV. 6)

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥२२॥

पुरुषः Purusha, सः that, परः highest, पार्थ O Partha, भक्त्या by devotion, लभ्यः is attainable, तु verily, अनन्यया without another object (unswerving), यस्य of whom, अन्तःस्थानि dwelling within, भूतानि beings, येन by whom, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, ततम् pervaded.

22. That highest Purusha, O Arjuna, is attainable by unswerving devotion to Him alone within Whom all beings dwell and by Whom all this is pervaded.

Commentary: All the beings (effects) dwell within the Purusha (the Supreme Person, the cause) because every effect rests within its cause. Just as the effect, pot, rests within its cause, the clay, so also all beings and the worlds rest within their cause, the Purusha. Therefore the whole world is pervaded by the Purusha.

Sri Sankara explains *exclusive devotion* as Jnana or knowledge of the Self.

Purusha is so called because everything is filled by It (derived from the Sanskrit root *pur* which means 'to fill') or because It rests in the body of all (derived from the Sanskrit root *pur*). None is higher than It and so It is the Supreme Person. (*Cf.* IX. 4; XI. 38; XV. 6 and 7)

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥२३॥

यत्र where, काले in time, तु verily, अनावृत्तिम् non-return, आवृत्तिम् return, च and, एव even, योगिनः Yogis, प्रयाताः departing, यान्ति go to, तम् that, कालम् time, वक्ष्यामि (I) will tell, भरतर्षभ O chief of Bharatas.

23. Now I will tell thee, O chief of Bharatas, the times departing at which the Yogis will return or not return.

Commentary: I shall declare to you, O Prince of the Bharatas, the time at which if the Yogis leave their body they will not be born again; and also when if they die they will be born again.

To return means 'to be born again'.

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥२४॥

अग्निः fire, ज्योतिः light, अहः day, शुक्लः the bright fortnight, षण्मासाः six months, उत्तरायणम् the northern path of the sun, तत्र there, प्रयाताः departed, गच्छन्ति go, ब्रह्म to Brahman, ब्रह्मविदः knowers of Brahman, जनाः people.

24. Fire, light, daytime, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern path of the sun (the northern solstice)—departing then (by these) men who know Brahman go to Brahman.

Commentary: This is the Uttara-Marga or Devayana, the northern path or the path of light, by which the Yogis go to Brahman. This path leads to salvation. It takes the devotee to Brahmaloka. The six months of the northern solstice is from the middle of January to the middle of July. It is regarded as the better period for death. There is a vivid description in the Chhandogya Upanishad, the Kaushitaki Upanishad and the Brahma Sutras, chapter IV. 3 and 4, ii. 18 and 21.

"On the road beginning with light (the departed soul proceeds), on account of that being widely known."

"Having reached the path of the gods he comes to the world of Agni (fire), to the world of Vayu (air), to the world of Varuna (rain), to the world of Indra (king of the gods), to the world of Prajapati (the Creator), to the world of Brahman."

"They go to the light, from the light to day, from day to the waxing half of the moon, from the waxing half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the north, from those months to the year, from the year to the sun."

"When the person goes away from this world he comes to Vayu (air). Then Vayu makes room for him like the hole of a wheel and through it he mounts higher. He comes to the sun."

"From the moon to the lightning; there a person that is not human leads him to Brahman."

Time is here used in the sense of the path or the stage on the path. *Fire* and *light* are the deities who preside over time. *Daytime* is the deity who presides over the day. The *bright fortnight* is the deity presiding over it. The *six months of the northern solstice* are the deity who presides over the northern path.

This is the path of illumination that leads to liberation.

The life-breaths of the liberated sages who have attained knowledge of the Self do not depart. They are absorbed in Brahman. The Jivanmuktas who attain Kaivalya-Moksha or immediate salvation or liberation have no place to go to or return from. They become one with the all-pervading Brahman.

Each step may mean a *plane* or a *state of consciousness* or the *degree of purity* or *illumination.* The more the purity the more the divine light. There are bright objects throughout the course of the path. There is illumination or knowledge when one passes along this path. Hence it is called the path of light.

After Bhishma was mortally wounded, he lay on the bed of arrows till the onset of the northern solstice and then departed from here to the Abode of the Lord.

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ।।२५।।

धूमः smoke, रात्रिः night, तथा also, कृष्णः the dark (fortnight), षण्मासाः the six months, दक्षिणायनम् the southern path of the sun, तत्र there, चान्द्रमसम् lunar, ज्योतिः light, योगी the Yogi, प्राप्य having attained, निवर्तते returns.

25. Attaining to the lunar light by smoke, night time, the dark fortnight also, the six months of the southern path of the sun (the southern solstice), the Yogi returns.

Commentary: This is the Pitriyana or the path of darkness or the path of the ancestors which leads to rebirth. Those who do sacrifices to the gods and other charitable works with expectation of reward go to the Chandraloka through this path and come back to this world when the fruits of the Karmas are exhausted.

'Smoke', 'night time', 'the dark fortnight' and 'the six months of the southern solstice' are all deities who preside over them. They may denote the degree of ignorance, attachment and passion. There are smoke and dark-coloured objects throughout the course. There is no illumination when one passes along this path. It is reached by ignorance. Hence it is called the path of darkness or smoke.

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययाऽऽवर्तते पुनः ॥२६॥

शुक्लकृष्णे bright and dark, गती (two) paths, हि verily, एते these, जगतः of the world, शाश्वते eternal, मते are thought, एकया by one, याति (he) goes, अनावृत्तिम् to non-return, अन्यया by another, आवर्तते (he) returns, पुनः again.

26. The bright and the dark paths of the world are verily thought to be eternal; by the one (the bright path) a man goes not to return and by the other (the dark path) he returns.

Commentary: The bright path is the path to the gods taken by the devotees. The dark path is of the manes taken by those who perform sacrifices or charitable acts with the expectation of rewards. These two paths are not open to the whole world. The bright path is open to the devotees and the dark one to those who are devoted to the rituals. These paths are as 'eternal' as the Samsara.

World here means devotees or people devoted to ritual.

Pitriloka or Chandraloka is Svarga or heaven.

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥२७॥

न not, एते these, सृती two paths, पार्थ O Partha, जानन् knowing, योगी the Yogi, मुह्यति is deluded, कश्चन anyone, तस्मात् therefore, सर्वेषु in all, कालेषु times, योगयुक्तः steadfast in Yoga, भव (be) thou, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

27. Knowing these paths, O Arjuna, no Yogi is deluded; therefore at all times be steadfast in Yoga.

Commentary: Knowing the nature of the two paths and the consequences they lead to, a Yogi never loses his discrimination. The Yogi who knows that the path of the gods or the path of light leads to Moksha (gradual liberation), and the path of darkness to Samsara or the world or region of birth and death, is no longer deluded. Knowledge of these two paths serves as a compass or a beaconlight to guide the Yogi's steps at every moment. He strives to stick to the path of light.

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव
दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा
योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥२८॥

वेदेषु in the Vedas, यज्ञेषु in sacrifices, तपःसु in austerities, च and, एव also, दानेषु in gifts, यत् whatever, पुण्यफलम् fruit of merit, प्रदिष्टम् is declared, अत्येति goes beyond, तत् that, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, विदित्वा having known, योगी the Yogi, परम् Supreme, स्थानम् abode, उपैति attains, च and, आद्यम् primeval (first, ancient).

28. Whatever fruit of merit is declared (in the scriptures) to accrue from (the study of) the Vedas, (the performance of) sacrifices, (the practice of) austerities, and gifts—beyond all this goes the Yogi, having known this; and he attains to the Supreme Primeval (first or ancient) Abode.

Commentary: The glory of Yoga is described in this verse.

Whatever meritorious effect is declared in the scriptures to accrue from the proper study of the Vedas, from the performance of sacrifices properly, from the practice of austerities—above all these rises the Yogi who rightly understands and follows the teaching imparted by Lord Krishna in His answers to the seven questions put by Arjuna, and who meditates on Brahman. He attains to the Supreme Abode of Brahman Which existed even in the beginning (primeval), and is the first or ancient.

Idam Viditva: Having known this. Having known properly the answers given by the Lord to the seven questions put by Arjuna at the beginning of this chapter.

(This chapter is known by the name Abhyasa Yoga also.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
अक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नाम अष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the eighth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman.

अथ नवमोऽध्यायः

NINTH DISCOURSE

राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगः

THE YOGA OF THE KINGLY SCIENCE AND THE KINGLY SECRET

श्री भगवानुवाच

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ।।१।।

इदम् this, तु indeed, ते to thee, गुह्यतमम् greatest secret, प्रवक्ष्यामि (I) shall declare, अनसूयवे to one who does not cavil, ज्ञानम् knowledge, विज्ञानसहितम् combined with experience, यत् which, ज्ञात्वा having known, मोक्ष्यसे thou shalt be free, अशुभात् from evil.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. I shall now declare to thee who does not cavil, the greatest secret, the knowledge combined with experience (Self-realisation). Having known this thou shalt be free from evil.

Commentary: *Idam (this)* alludes to knowledge of the Self.

Jnana: Theoretical knowledge of Brahman through the study of the Upanishads, also known as Paroksha Brahma Jnana.

Vijnana: Direct intuitive perception of Brahman or Atma-Sakshatkara, also known as Aparoksha Brahma Jnana.

This alone forms the direct means of attaining to liberation from evil or the bondage of Samsara, freedom from birth and death.

The knowledge of the Self is the most profound secret. It can hardly be described in words. It can be realised only through direct experience or spiritual intuition. Atman or Brahman or the self-luminous, eternal, Supreme Purusha is ever shining in the chambers of the hearts of men. Throughout the ages there have always been a few who have trodden the spiritual path and found out this secret or the spiritual treasure of the precious pearl of the Self. Knowledge of the Self is the only direct means for attaining liberation. Karma Yoga purifies the heart and leads to the dawn of the knowledge of the Self.

Lord Krishna says, "O Arjuna, I shall teach you this profoundest secret knowledge combined with realisation as you are free from jealousy." From this we can clearly understand that freedom from jealousy is an important qualification for an aspirant. Knowledge can only dawn in a mind which is free from all forms of jealousy which causes great distraction of the mind and produces intense heart-burning. Matsarya (malicious envy), Irshya (jealous of others' prosperity or happiness) and Asuya (envious or indignant over the merits of another) are all varieties of jealousy. If you superimpose evil qualities on a virtuous man who really does not possess these qualities and speak ill of him, this is jealousy (Asuya). To behold evil or to look at a person with the fault-finding evil eye, and to see evil in him who is free from any kind of fault and who is virtuous is Asuya. Jealousy is only petty-mindedness. This is a modification of ignorance. It can be eradicated by enquiry of the nature of the Self and cultivating its opposite qualities, viz., nobility, broad and universal tolerance, magnanimity and large-heartedness.

To thee who does not carp or cavil: This implies that Arjuna was endowed with all the virtues of a disciple such as straightforwardness, self-control, restraint of the senses, serenity of mind, discrimination, dispassion, etc. This is the Upalakshana (the truth alluded to where only a part is stated) and Asuya is the Upalakshaka (the hint which alludes to the Upalakshana).

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥२॥

राजविद्या the king of sciences, राजगुह्यम् kingly secret, पवित्रम् purifier, इदम् this, उत्तमम् highest, प्रत्यक्षावगमम् realisable by direct, intuitional knowledge, धर्म्यम् according to righteousness, सुसुखम् very easy, कर्तुम् to perform, अव्ययम् imperishable.

2. This is the kingly science, the kingly secret, the supreme purifier, realisable by direct intuitional knowledge, according to righteousness, very easy to perform and imperishable.

Commentary: In this verse Lord Krishna eulogises the knowledge of Brahman very highly in order to create a great interest in the spiritual aspirants for attaining It quickly.

There is neither blind faith nor faith-mongering in this 'royal science'. The truth, the sovereign secret (the Self or the Absolute) can be directly realised by intuition or immediate perception. The science of the Absolute is the most splendid of all sciences. It is the science of sciences. Of sciences the highest, of secrets the most profound, of purifiers the supreme is this. The knowledge of Brahman is the best purifier. It reduces the roots of all Karmas and all the Karmas themselves which have been stored up in the course of many thousands of births, into ashes in the twinkling of an eye. It destroys Avidya along with its effects. An expiatory act (Prayaschitta) cannot destroy all sins. It removes the effect of a single sin, only to some extent. Even if it is removed the effect of that sin remains in a subtle state in the mind and forces him to do sinful acts in his next birth. But the knowledge of the Self destroys quickly all the sins in their gross and subtle states that are accumulated in the course of several thousands of births along with Avidya, their cause. That is the reason why it is a supreme purifier. The causal body of the Jiva is called Mula-Avidya (root- ignorance). The Avidya or the veil of ignorance that envelops the visible objects of this world is called Sthula Avidya or gross ignorance.

The knowledge of the Self is not opposed to Dharma. It is the fruit of all actions done in many births without expectation of fruits. Further, the knowledge of the Absolute can very easily be attained. One may think that this knowledge will perish soon as it is easily obtained, when its effect is exhausted. It is not so. It is imperishable. It is everlasting. It shines for ever by its own Self-effulgence. He who has tasted this nectar even once becomes immortal. Therefore the knowledge of the Absolute is certainly worth acquiring. You will have to strive very hard to attain it anyhow in this birth, as it is very difficult to get a human birth. Strive hard every moment, for life is uncertain and the prize (final liberation) is great.

अश्रद्दधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥३॥

अश्रद्दधानाः without faith, पुरुषाः men, धर्मस्य of duty, अस्य of this, परन्तप O scorcher of foes, अप्राप्य without attaining, माम् Me, निवर्तन्ते return, मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि in the path of this world of death.

3. Those who have no faith in this Dharma (knowledge of the Self), O Parantapa (Arjuna), return to the path of this world of death without attaining Me.

Commentary: Arjuna asks, “O Lord, why do people not attempt to attain this knowledge of the Self when it can be easily attained, when it is the highest of all things, and when it gives the greatest benefits? All should certainly attain this knowledge.” The Lord replies, “O My beloved disciple, people have no faith in this Dharma or knowledge and so return to the path of this world of death. Even if they strive with the help of the means of their own imagination they cannot attain Me as they are not endowed with the right means prescribed by the scriptures.”

Dharma means law, religion, knowledge of the Self.

This faith is not mere intellectual belief in certain dogmas or principles. It is not merely belief in the statement of another. It is unshakable firm inner conviction that the knowledge of the Self alone can give one supreme peace, immortality and eternal bliss. It was this strong and unflinching faith of Sri Sankara that goaded him to leave his mother and take shelter under the kind protection of his Guru Sri Govindapada for attaining this knowledge which is the “supreme purifier, intuitional, according to righteousness, very easy to perform, and imperishable.” It was the strong faith of Lord Buddha that induced him to have that iron determination which he expressed in these words, “I will not budge an inch from my seat till I get illumination.” Faith goes hand in hand with fiery determination.

The Lord has eulogised the knowledge of the Self in the first two verses by the positive method (Vidhi Mukhastuti). He has extolled it in the third verse by the negative method

(Nishedha Mukhastuti). The benefits of obtaining knowledge of the Self are described in the first and the second verses. This is Vidhi Mukhastuti. The disastrous effects that result from not obtaining the knowledge of the Self are described in the third verse. This is Nishedha Mukhastuti.

The greedy, lustful and sinful persons who are the followers of the philosophy of the flesh, who lead the life of the demons, who worship the body taking it to be the Self, and who have no faith in the knowledge of the Self, do not reach Me. They do not even possess an iota of devotion which is also one of the paths that lead men to Me. They remain in the path of the world of death which leads to hell and the lower births of animals, worms, etc.

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥४॥

मया by Me, ततम् pervaded, इदम् this, सर्वम् all, जगत् world, अव्यक्तमूर्तिना by the unmanifested form, मत्स्थानि exist in Me, सर्वभूतानि all beings, न not, च and, अहम् I, तेषु in them, अवस्थितः placed.

4. All this world is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest aspect; all beings exist in Me, but I do not dwell in them.

Commentary: *Avyaktamurti* is Para Brahman or the Supreme Unmanifested Being invisible to the senses but cognisable through intuition. All beings from Brahma, the Creator, down to the blade of grass or an ant, dwell in the transcendental Para Brahman. They have no independent existence: they exist through the Self which is the support for everything, which underlies them all.

Nothing here contains It. As Brahman is the Self of all beings, one may imagine that It dwells in them. But it is not so. How could it be? How can the Infinite be contained in a finite object? Brahman has no connection or contact with any material object, just as a chair or a table has contact with the ground or a man or a book. So It does not dwell in those beings. That which has no connection or contact with objects or beings cannot be contained anywhere as if in a vessel, trunk, room or receptacle. The Self is not rooted in all these forms. It is not contained by any of these forms just as the ether is not contained in any form though all forms are derived from the ether.

All beings appear to be living in Brahman, but this is an illusion. If this illusion vanishes, nothing remains anywhere except Brahman. When ignorance, the cause of this illusion, disappears, the very idea of the existence of these beings also will vanish.

In verses 4 and 5 the Lord uses a paradox or an apparent contradiction: "All beings dwell in Me and yet do not dwell in Me; I do not dwell in them." For a thinker there is no real contradiction at all. Just as space contains all beings and yet is not touched by them, so also Para Brahman contains everything and yet is not touched by them. Even Mulaprakriti, the source or womb of this world, is supported by Brahman. Brahman has no support or root. It rests in Its own pristine glory. *(Cf.* VII. 12, 24; VIII. 22)

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥५॥

न not, च and, मत्स्थानि dwelling in Me, भूतानि beings, पश्य behold, मे My, योगम् Yoga, ऐश्वरम् Divine, भूतभृत् supporting the beings, न not, च and, भूतस्थः dwelling in the beings, मम My, आत्मा Self, भूतभावनः bringing forth beings.

5. Nor do beings exist in Me (in reality): behold My divine Yoga, supporting all beings, but not dwelling in them, is My Self, the efficient cause of beings.

Commentary: Brahman or the Self has no connection with any object as It is very subtle and attributeless and formless; and so It is unattached (Asanga). There cannot be any real connection between matter and Spirit. Saakara (an object with form) can have no connection with Nirakara (the formless). How could this be? "Devoid of attachment It is never attached." *(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad,* III. 9. 26) Though unattached, It supports all beings; It is the efficient or instrumental cause; It brings forth all beings but It does not dwell in them, because It is unconnected with any object. This is a great mystery. Just as the dreamer has no connection with the dream object, just as ether or air has no connection with the vessel, so also Brahman has no connection with the objects or the body. The connection between the Self and the physical body is illusory.

The Adhishthana or support (Brahman) for the illusory object (Kalpitam) superimposed on Brahman has no connection whatsoever with the qualities or the defects of the objects that are superimposed on the Absolute. The snake is superimposed on a rope. The rope is the support (Adhishthana) for the illusory snake (Kalpitam). This is an example of superimposition or Adhyasa. (*Cf.* VII. 25; X. 7; XI. 8)

यथाऽऽकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥६॥

यथा as, आकाशस्थितः rests in the Akasa, नित्यम् always, वायुः the air, सर्वत्रगः moving everywhere, महान् great, तथा so, सर्वाणि all, भूतानि beings, मत्स्थानि rest in Me, इति thus, उपधारय know.

6. As the mighty wind, moving everywhere, rests always in the ether, even so, know thou that all beings rest in Me.

Commentary: The Lord gives a beautiful illustration or simile in this verse to explain what He has said in the previous two verses. Just as the wind ever rests in the ether (space) without any contact or attachment, so also all beings and objects rest in Brahman without any attachment or contact at all. These objects cannot produce any effect on It.

What sort of relationship is there between Brahman and the objects of this universe? Is it Samyoga, Samavaya or Tadatmya Sambandha? The relationship of the stick with the drum is Samyoga Sambandha. Let us assume that there is such a Sambandha (relationship or connection). There cannot be connection between all the parts because Brahman is infinite and the elements are finite. You may say that there is connection of the Ekadesa type. This is also not possible, because there can be such relationship only between objects which possess members or parts like the tree and monkey. (Ekadesa is partial). Brahman has no parts.

If you say that there is Samavaya Sambandha between Brahman and the objects or the elements, this is also not possible. The relationship between the attribute and the possessors of that attribute is called Samavaya Sambandha. The relationship between an individual Brahmin and the whole Brahmin caste is also Samavaya Sambandha. The relationship between hand and man, between the leg and the man is also Samavaya Sambandha. Such relationship does not exist between Brahman and the objects or the elements.

The third kind of relationship, viz., Tadatmya Sambandha is seen to exist between milk and water, fire and the iron ball. Milk shares its qualities of sweetness and whiteness with water. Fire shares its qualities of brilliance, heat and redness with the hot iron ball. This too is not possible between Brahman and the objects or the elements, because Brahman is existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute and all-full and perfect; whereas the elements are insentient, finite and painful. How can they with quite contrary qualities have Tadatmya Sambandha with Brahman?

Therefore it can be admitted that the elements have only got Kalpita Sambandha (superimposition) with Brahman. That object which is superimposed on the substratum or support exists in name only. It does not exist in reality. Brahman is the support or the substratum for this world of names and forms. World here includes all beings and their three kinds of bodies (physical, mental and causal). Therefore, the elements or the beings in this world are not really rooted in Brahman. They do not really dwell in Brahman. It is all in name only.

Vayu also means Sutratman or Hiranyagarbha. *Bhuta* also means the individual consciousness. Just as the ether in the pot is not distinct from the universal ether before the origin and after the destruction of the pot and even when the pot exists, and it is of the nature of the universal ether during the three periods of time, so also the individual soul is of the nature of Brahman during the three periods of time, past, present and future.

Just as all effects exist in a state of non-difference in their material cause before they appear, during their period of existence and after their destruction, so also the individual souls are not different from Brahman before the origin of the various limiting adjuncts like mind, intellect, etc., during the period of their existence and after their destruction.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ।।७।।

सर्वभूतानि all beings, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, प्रकृतिम् to Nature, यान्ति go, मामिकाम् My, कल्पक्षये at the end of the Kalpa, पुनः again, तानि them, कल्पादौ at the beginning of the Kalpa, विसृजामि send forth, अहम् I.

7. All beings, O Arjuna, go into My Nature at the end of a Kalpa; I send them forth again at the beginning of (the next) Kalpa.

Commentary: *Prakriti:* The inferior one or the lower Nature composed of the three qualities, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

Just as the grass grows from the earth and dries up in the earth, just as the ripples and waves rise from the ocean and disappear in the ocean itself, just as the dreams proceed from the mind and melt away in the mind itself when the dreamer comes back to the waking state, so also the beings which arise from Nature merge into it during dissolution or Pralaya.

Pralaya is the period of dissolution. Maha-Utpatti is the time of creation. (*Cf.* VIII. 18, 19)

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ।।८।।

प्रकृतिम् Nature, स्वाम् My own, अवष्टभ्य having animated, विसृजामि (I) send forth, पुनः again, पुनः again, भूतग्रामम् multitude of beings, इमम् this, कृत्स्नम् all, अवशम् helpless, प्रकृतेः of Nature, वशात् by force.

8. Animating My Nature, I again and again send forth all this multitude of beings, helpless by the force of the Nature.

Commentary: The Lord leans on, presses or embraces Nature. He invigorates and fertilises Nature which had gone to sleep at the end of the Mahakalpa or universal dissolution and projects again and again this whole multitude of beings. He gazes at each level and plane after plane comes into being.

The term Prakriti denotes or indicates the five Kleshas or afflictions, viz., Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Raga (likes), Dvesha (dislikes) and Abhinivesa (clinging to earthly life). (*Cf.* IV. 6)

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ।।९।।

न not, च and, माम् Me, तानि these, कर्माणि acts, निबध्नन्ति bind, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya, उदासीनवत् like one indifferent, आसीनम् sitting, असक्तम् unattached, तेषु in those, कर्मसु acts.

9. These acts do not bind Me, O Arjuna, sitting like one indifferent, unattached to those acts.

Commentary: *These acts:* Creation and dissolution of the universe. I am the only cause of dissolution of the universe. I am the only cause of Nature and its activities and yet, being indifferent to everything, I do nothing. Nor do I cause anything to be done.

I remain as one neutral or indifferent or unconcerned. I have no attachment for the fruits of those actions. Further I have not got the egoistic feeling of agency: "I do this." I know that the Self is actionless. Therefore the actions involved in creation and dissolution do not bind Me.

As in the case of Isvara so in the case of others also: the absence of the egoistic feeling of agency and the absence of attachment to the fruits of action is the cause of freedom (from Dharma and Adharma, virtue and evil) The ignorant man who works with egoism and who expects rewards for his actions is bound by his own actions like the silkworm in the cocoon.

Just as the neutral referee or umpire in a cricket or football match is not affected by the victory or defeat of the parties, so also the Lord is not affected by the creation and destruction of this world as He remains unconcerned or indifferent and as He is a silent and changeless witness. (*Cf.* IV. 14)

मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनाऽनेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ।।१०।।

मया by Me, अध्यक्षेण as supervisor, प्रकृतिः Nature, सूयते produces, सचराचरम् the moving and the unmoving, हेतुना by cause, अनेन by this, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, जगत् the world, विपरिवर्तते revolves.

10. Under Me as supervisor, Nature produces the moving and the unmoving; because of this, O Arjuna, the world revolves.

Commentary: The Lord presides only as a witness. Nature does everything. By reason of His proximity or presence, Nature sends forth the moving and the unmoving. The prime cause of this creation is Nature. For the movable and the immovable, and for the whole universe, the root cause is Nature itself.

Although all actions are done with the help of the light of the sun, yet, the sun cannot become the doer of actions. Even so the Lord cannot become the doer of actions even though Nature does all actions with the help of the light of the Lord.

As Brahman illumines Avidya (ignorance), the material cause of this world, It is regarded as the cause of this world. The magnet is quite indifferent although it makes the iron pieces move on account of its proximity. Even so the Lord remains indifferent although He makes Nature create the world.

As the Lord and the Witness, He presides over this world which consists of moving and unmoving objects; the manifested and the unmanifested wheel round and round.

What is the purpose of creation? Why has God created this world when He has really no concern with any enjoyment whatsoever? This is a transcendental question or Atiprasna. It is therefore irrelevant to ask or to answer this question. You cannot say that God created this world for His own enjoyment because He really does not enjoy anything. He is a mere witness only. (*Cf.* X. 8)

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥११॥

अवजानन्ति disregard, माम् Me, मूढाः fools, मानुषीम् human, तनुम् form, आश्रितम् assumed, परम् higher, भावम् state or nature, अजानन्तः not knowing, मम My, भूतमहेश्वरम् the Great Lord of beings.

11. Fools disregard Me, clad in human form, not knowing My higher Being as the great Lord of (all) beings.

Commentary: Fools only find fault with My pure nature, just as a man with jaundiced eyes finds all objects to be yellow. The man who is suffering from fever finds even milk as bitter as the essence of neem. Those who wish to behold Me by means of the physical eyes cannot know Me. If anyone takes the mirage for the Ganga, can he find any water there?

Fools who do not have discrimination and right understanding despise Me, dwelling in the human form. I have taken this body to bless My devotees. These fools have no knowledge of My higher Being. They do not know that I am the great Lord, the Supreme Self, the luminous, omniscient, pure, ever free, immortal, wise, the Self of all. These fools take Me for an ordinary mortal and despise Me always. The wise know both My transcendental nature and the glory of My manifestation.

I pervade, permeate and interpenetrate the universe. I am the support of this world, body, mind, life-force and the senses and yet there are some miserable fools, who say that I do not exist. There is thus not a place anywhere where I am not, and yet these people are not able to see Me. Look at the misfortune of these people. Pitiable is their lot! (*Cf.* IV. 6; VII. 24)

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥१२॥

मोघाशाः of vain hopes, मोघकर्माणः of vain actions, मोघज्ञानाः of vain knowledge, विचेतसः senseless, राक्षसीम् devilish, आसुरीम् undivine, च and, एव verily, प्रकृतिम् nature, मोहिनीम् deceitful, श्रिताः (are) possessed of.

12. Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge and senseless, they verily are possessed of the deceitful nature of demons and undivine beings.

Commentary: They entertain vain hopes, for there can be no hope in perishable forms. It is vain hope because they run after transient objects and miss the Eternal. It is vain action, because it is not performed by them as sacrifice unto the Lord. The Agnihotra (a ritual) and other actions performed by them are fruitless, because they insult the Lord. They are senseless. They have no discrimination. They have no idea of the eternal Self. They worship their body only. They behold no self beyond the body. They neglect their own Self. They do atrocious crimes and cruel actions. They rob others' property and murder people. They partake of the nature of the demons and the undivine beings.

The *Rakshasas* are Tamasic; and the *Asuras* are Rajasic.

Prakriti means here Svabhava (one's own nature).

They see the external human body only. They have no knowledge of the Self that dwells within the body. They do not behold God in the universe. They live for eating and drinking only.

He who entertains hope of getting the rewards of actions through mere Karma alone, without the grace of the Lord is one of empty hope and empty deed. Karmas are insentient. They cannot give rewards independently. The omniscient Lord Who knows the relationship between Karmas and their fruits can dispense them. He who has obtained knowledge from books which do not admit of the existence of the Self and which do not speak of the Self is one of empty knowledge. This will not give any reward. That knowledge obtained through the study of spiritual books which treat of Brahman alone can give the reward. *(Cf.* VII. 15; XVI. 6, 20)

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ।।१३।।

महात्मानः great souls, तु but, माम् Me, पार्थ O Partha, दैवीम् divine, प्रकृतिम् nature, आश्रिताः refuged (in), भजन्ति worship, अनन्यमनसः with a mind devoted to nothing else, ज्ञात्वा having known, भूतादिम् the source of beings, अव्ययम् imperishable.

13. But the great souls, O Arjuna, partaking of My divine nature, worship Me with a single mind (with the mind devoted to nothing else), knowing Me as the imperishable source of beings.

Commentary: *Jnatva Bhutadimavyayam:* There is another interpretation—knowing Me to be the source or the origin of beings and imperishable.

Daivim Prakritim: Divine or Sattvic nature. Those who are endowed with divine nature, and who possess self-restraint, mercy, faith, purity, etc.

Mahatmanah: Or, the high-souled ones are those whose pure minds have been made by Me, as My special abode. I dwell in the pure minds of the high-souled ones. They have sincere devotion to Me. Those who possess divine Sattvic nature, who are endowed with a pure mind, and who have knowledge of the Self are Mahatmas.

Bhutas: All living beings, as well as the five elements.

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।।१४।।

सततम् always, कीर्तयन्तः glorifying, माम् Me, यतन्तः striving, च and, दृढव्रताः firm in vows, नमस्यन्तः prostrating, च and, माम् Me, भक्त्या with devotion, नित्ययुक्ताः always steadfast, उपासते worship.

14. Always glorifying Me, striving, firm in vows, prostrating themselves before Me, they worship Me with devotion always steadfast.

Commentary: These great souls sing My glory. They do Japa (repetition) of Pranava (Om). They study and recite the Upanishads. They hear the Srutis (the Vedas) from their spiritual preceptor, reflect and meditate on the attributeless Absolute (Nirguna Brahman). They cultivate the Sattvic virtues such as patience, mercy, cosmic love, tolerance, forbearance, truthfulness, purity, etc. They control the senses and steady the mind. They are firm in their vows of non-violence, truthfulness and purity in thought, word and deed. They worship Me with great faith and devotion as the inner Self hidden in their heart. As a neophyte cannot see God face to face, he will have to worship his Guru (spiritual preceptor) first and regard him as God or Brahman Himself.

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ।।१५।।

ज्ञानयज्ञेन with the wisdom-sacrifice, च and, अपि also, अन्ये others, यजन्तः sacrificing, माम् Me, उपासते worship, एकत्वेन as one, पृथक्त्वेन as different, बहुधा in various ways, विश्वतोमुखम् the All-faced.

15. Others also sacrificing with the wisdom-sacrifice worship Me, the All-faced, as one, as distinct, and as manifold.

Commentary: Others too sacrificing by the wisdom-sacrifice, i.e., seeing the Self in all, adore Me the One and the manifold, present everywhere. They regard all the forms they see as the forms of God, all sounds they hear as the names of God. They give all objects they eat as offerings unto the Lord in various ways.

Some adore Him with the knowledge that there is only one Reality, the Supreme Being Who is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. They identify themselves with the Truth or Brahman. This is the Monistic view of the Vedantins. Some worship Him making a distinction between the Lord and themselves with the attitude of master and servant. This is the view of the Dualistic School of philosophy. Some worship Him with the knowledge that He exists as the various divinities, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Siva, etc.

Visvatomukham: Others worship Him Who has assumed all the manifold forms in the world, Who exists in all the forms as the All-faced (the one Lord exists in all the different forms with His face on all sides, as it were). *(Cf.* IV. 33)

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम् ।
मंत्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ।।१६।।

अहम् I, क्रतुः sacrifice, अहम् I, यज्ञः the sacrifice, स्वधा the offering to Pitris or ancestors, अहम् I, अहम् I, औषधम् the medicinal herbs and all plants, मन्त्रः sacred syllable, अहम् I, अहम् I, एव also, आज्यम् ghee or clarified butter, अहम् I, अग्निः the fire, अहम् I, हुतम् the offering.

16. I am the Kratu; I am the Yajna; I am the offering (food) to the manes; I am the medicinal herbs and all the plants; I am the Mantra; I am also the Ghee or the melted butter; I am the fire; I am the oblation.

Commentary: *Kratu* is a kind of Vedic sacrifice.

Yajna is the worship enjoined in the Smriti or the holy books laying down the law and the code of conduct.

I am the *Mantra,* the chant with which the oblation is offered to the manes or ancestors, and the shining ones (the Devatas or gods).

Hutam also means the act of offering.

Aushadham: All plants including rice and barley; or medicine that can cure diseases. (*Cf.* IV. 24)

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोंकार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥१७॥

पिता father, अहम् I, अस्य of this, जगतः world, माता mother, धाता the dispenser of the fruits of actions, पितामहः grandfather, वेद्यम् the (one) thing to be known, पवित्रम् the purifier, ओंकारः the Omkara, ऋक् Rik, साम Sama, यजुः Yajus, एव also, च and.

17. I am the father of this world, the mother, the dispenser of the fruits of actions and the grandfather; the (one) thing to be known, the purifier, the sacred monosyllable (Om), and also the Rik-, the Sama- and the Yajur-Vedas.

Commentary: *Dhata:* Supporter or sustainer by dispensing the fruits of actions.

Isvara or the Saguna Brahman is the father. Mula-Prakriti or the primordial Nature is the mother. The pure Satchidananda Para Brahman (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute) is the grandfather.

Vedyam: The one thing to be known. This is the Supreme Being.

Pavitram: Purifier. I am of the form of a bath in the holy river Ganga and the Gayatri Japa which purify the aspirants externally and internally.

Cha: and. This includes the Atharvana-Veda also. (*Cf.* XIV. 3)

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥१८॥

गतिः the goal, भर्ता the supporter, प्रभुः the Lord, साक्षी the witness, निवासः the abode, शरणम् the shelter, सुहृत् the friend, प्रभवः the origin, प्रलयः the dissolution, स्थानम् the foundation, निधानम् the treasure-house, बीजम् the seed, अव्ययम् imperishable.

18. I am the goal, the supporter, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the shelter, the friend, the origin, the dissolution, the foundation, the treasure-house and the seed which is imperishable.

Commentary: I am the goal, the fruit of action. He who nourishes and supports is the husband. I am the witness of the good and evil actions done by the Jivas (individuals). I am the abode wherein all living beings dwell. I am the shelter or refuge for the distressed. I relieve the sufferings of those who take shelter under Me. I am the friend, i.e., I do good without expecting any return. I am the source of this universe. In Me the whole world is dissolved. I am the mainstay or the foundation of this world. I am the treasure-house which living beings shall enjoy in the future. I am the imperishable seed, i.e., the cause of the origin of all beings. Therefore, take shelter under My feet.

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ।।१९।।

तपामि give heat, अहम् I, अहम् I, वर्षम् rain, निगृह्णामि withhold, उत्सृजामि send forth, च and, अमृतम् immortality, च and, एव also, मृत्युः death, च and, सत् existence, असत् non-existence, च and, अहम् I, अर्जुन O Arjuna.

19. (As the sun) I give heat; I withhold and send forth the rain; I am immortality and also death, existence and non-existence, O Arjuna.

Commentary: I radiate heat in the form of the sun. I send forth the rain in the form of Indra in the rainy season and I take it back during the rest of the year.

Sat: Existence, the manifested world (the effect).

Asat: Non-existence, the unmanifested (the cause).

Non-existence does not mean nothingness. The subtle, unmanifested cause is spoken of as non-existence. The Self or

Brahman or the Eternal can never be altogether non-existence. It always exists. It is Existence Absolute. If you say that the subtle unmanifested cause is nothing, it is impossible to conceive existence coming out of nothing. The Chhandogya Upanishad asks, "How can existence come out of non-existence?" It is simply absurd to conceive that existence has arisen out of non-existence (nothing).

For a Vedantin (student or follower of Vedanta) Brahman (the Absolute) is Sat (existence) because It always exists and because It is unchanging. This manifested world is Asat or unreal. For the worldly-minded people who have neither understanding nor knowledge of Brahman, who are endowed with gross and impure mind, who do not have a sharp and subtle intellect, and who can perceive the gross forms only, this manifested world is the Sat and the subtle unmanifested Mula-Prakriti (the primordial Nature), the cause of this manifested world, is Asat. For them Brahman also is Asat. The unmanifested refers to Mula-Prakriti and Para Brahman also because both are hidden.

Every object has three states, viz., the gross (Sthula), the subtle (Sukshma) and the causal (Karana). Mahakarana (the great causeless cause) is Para Brahman. The gross and the subtle states are the effects of Karana. What you see outside is the physical body. This physical body is moved by the astral (the subtle) body made up of the mind, life-force and the senses. The causal body is the seed-body. From this seed-body have sprung the subtle and the gross bodies. Take the case of an orange. The outer skin is its physical body; the inner pulp or essence is the subtle body; the innermost causal body which gives rise to the pulp and the outer skin is the seed. This is only a gross illustration. The orange has got another kind of subtle and causal bodies. The worldly-minded man beholds the physical body only and takes this as the Truth. For him, the astral and the causal bodies are unreal.

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा
यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-
मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥२०॥

त्रैविद्याः the knowers of the three Vedas, माम् Me, सोमपाः the drinkers of Soma, पूतपापाः purified from sin, यज्ञैः by sacrifices, इष्ट्वा worshipping, स्वर्गतिम् way to heaven, प्रार्थयन्ते pray, ते they, पुण्यम् holy, आसाद्य having reached, सुरेन्द्रलोकम् the world of the Lord of gods, अश्नन्ति eat (enjoy), दिव्यान् divine, दिवि in heaven, देवभोगान् the divine pleasures.

20. The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, purified of all sins, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven; they reach the holy world of the Lord of the gods and enjoy in heaven the divine pleasures of the gods.

Commentary: Many aspirants climb up to a certain height on the ladder of Yoga. They are irresistibly swept away by the temptation of the higher planes (the heaven, and the plane of the celestial beings, etc.). They lose their power of discrimination and right understanding and thereby lose themselves in heavenly enjoyments. The dwellers of the higher planes, the shining ones, tempt the aspirants in a variety of ways. They say unto them, “O Yogi, we are very much pleased with your austerities and dispassion, spiritual practices and divine qualities. This is the plane for your final resting which you have obtained through your merit and your austerities. We are all your servants to obey your orders and carry out your commands or behests. Here is the celestial car for you. You can move about anywhere you like. Here are the celestial damsels to attend on you. They will please you with their celestial music. Here is the ‘wish-fulfilling tree’ which will give you whatever you want. Here is the celestial nectar in the golden cup, which will make you immortal. Here is the celestial lake of supreme joy. You can swim freely in this lake.” The uncautious Yogi is easily carried away by the invitations of the gods and the sweet flowery speeches. He gets false satisfaction or contentment. He thinks that he has reached the highest goal of Yoga. He yields to the temptations and his energy is dissipated in various directions. As soon as his merits are exhausted he comes down to this earth-plane. He will have to start his upward climb on the spiritual ladder once more. But that dispassionate Yogi who is endowed with strong discrimination rejects ruthlessly these invitations from the gods, marches boldly on his spiritual path and stops not till he attains the highest rung on the ladder of Yoga or the highest summit on the hill of knowledge or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He is fully conscious that enjoyments in heaven are as much worthless as those of this illusory world. The pleasures of heaven are subtle, exceedingly intense and extremely intoxicating. That is the reason why the uncautious, non-vigilant and less dispassionate aspirant yields easily to the temptations of the higher planes. Even in this physical plane, in the West and in America where there is abundance of wealth, plenty of dollars and gold, people enjoy subtle and intense sensual pleasures. Every day scientists bring out new inventions, new forms of sensual pleasures for the gratification of the mischievous and revolting senses. Even an abstemious man of simple habits of India becomes a changed man when he lives in America or Europe for some time. He yields to the temptations. Such is the power of Maya. Such is the influence of temptation. Such is the strength of the senses. That man who is endowed with strong discrimination, sustained dispassion, good self-analytic power, and burning yearning for liberation, can resist temptations and he alone can be really happy. He alone can attain the highest goal of life, the final beatitude or the sublime vision of the Infinite.

Those who drink the Soma juice are purified from sin.

Sacrifices: Such as the Agnistoma, Jyotistoma. They worship Me as the Vasus and other deities (Rudras and Adityas) by sacrifices such as the Agnistoma.

Indra is the Lord of the gods. He is called Satakratu because he had performed a hundred sacrifices. The divine pleasures are the supernatural pleasures of the heaven.

Divya-Bhoga: An enjoyment that is beyond the reach of man or an enjoyment that can be had only by the celestial body of the gods or an enjoyment given by the gods in the heaven. The term *Bhoga* indicates sensual pleasures. Though the heavenly pleasures are of a very subtle nature, yet they are sensual pleasures only. *(Cf.* II. 45)

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं
क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥२१॥

ते they, तम् that, भुक्त्वा having enjoyed, स्वर्गलोकम् heaven-world, विशालम् vast, क्षीणे at the exhaustion of, पुण्ये merit, मर्त्यलोकम् the world of mortals, विशन्ति enter, एवम् thus, त्रयीधर्मम् of the three Vedas, अनुप्रपन्नाः abiding by, गतागतम् the state of going and returning, कामकामाः desiring desires, लभन्ते attain.

21. They, having enjoyed the vast heaven, enter the world of mortals when their merit is exhausted; thus abiding by the injunctions of the *three* (Vedas) and desiring (objects of) desires, they attain to the state of going and returning.

Commentary: When the accumulated merit (the cause of heavenly pleasures) is exhausted, they descend to this world. They come and go. They have no independence.

The Dharma of the three: Mere Vedic ritual, enjoined by the three Vedas.

Kama-Kamah: The people whose minds are filled with Vasanas or worldly tendencies.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥२२॥

अनन्याः without others, चिन्तयन्तः thinking, माम् Me, ये who, जनाः men, पर्युपासते worship, तेषाम् of them, नित्याभियुक्तानाम् of the ever-united, योगक्षेमम् the supply of what is not already possessed, and the preservation of what is already possessed, वहामि carry, अहम् I.

22. For those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, for those ever-united, I secure what is not already possessed and preserve what they already possess.

Commentary: *Ananyah:* Non-separate. This is another interpretation. Persons who, meditating on Me as non-separate, worship Me in all beings—to them who are ever devout, I secure gain and safety. They consider themselves as non-separate, i.e., they look upon the Supreme Being as non-separate from their own Self; they look upon the Supreme Being as their own Self.

Those devotees who behold nothing as separate from themselves have no selfish interests of their own. They certainly do not look for their own gain and safety. They have no desire for life or death. They have taken sole refuge in the Lord. They have nothing to lose, because there is nothing they call their own. Their very bodies become God's. They have no desire for acquisition because all their desires are gratified by their communion with the Lord. They have eternal satisfaction as they possess all the divine Aisvarya, the supreme wealth of the Lord.

They entertain no other thoughts than those of the Lord. Consequently the Lord Himself looks after their bodily wants, such as food and clothing (this is known as Yoga), and preserves what they already possess (this is known as Kshema). He does these two acts. Just as the father and mother attend to the bodily needs of their children, so also the Lord attends to the needs of His devotees.

They direct their whole mind with full faith towards the Lord. They make the Lord alone the sole object of their thought. For them nothing is dearer in this world than the Lord. They live for the Lord alone. They think of Him only with singleness of purpose and one-pointed devotion. They behold nothing but the Lord. They love Him in all creatures. When they lead such a life, the Lord takes the whole burden of securing gain (Yoga) and safety (Kshema) for them upon Himself.

Nityayuktah: Those who constantly meditate on the Lord with intense devotion and one-pointed mind. *(Cf.* VIII. 14; XVIII. 66)

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ।।२३।।

ये who, अपि even, अन्यदेवताः other gods, भक्ताः devotees, यजन्ते worship, श्रद्धया with faith, अन्विताः endowed, ते they, अपि also, माम् Me, एव alone, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, यजन्ति worship, अविधिपूर्वकम् by the wrong method.

23. Even those devotees who, endowed with faith, worship other gods, worship Me alone, O Arjuna, by the wrong method.

Commentary: They worship Me in ignorance. Their mode of worship is contrary to the ancient rule. Hence they return to this world.

People worship Agni, Indra, Surya, Varuna, the Vasus, etc. Even they attain Me, because I am everywhere. But their devotion is not pure. It is vicarious. Water should be given to the root and not to the branches. If the root is satisfied, the whole tree must be and is satisfied. Even so, if I (the root of this world and all the gods) am satisfied, all the gods must be and are satisfied. Though the messages from the five organs of knowledge reach the one consciousness, will it be right and useful to place a sweetmeat in the ear and a flower in the eyes? The function of eating must be done by the mouth alone and the function of smelling by the nose alone. Therefore I should be worshipped in My own name. They should know Me as the Self in all beings. They should recognise Me in other worship. I am the root. I am the source of all the gods and of this whole world. (*Cf.* IV. 11; VII. 20)

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ।।२४।।

अहम् I, हि verily, सर्वयज्ञानाम् of all sacrifices, भोक्ता enjoyer, च and, प्रभुः Lord, एव alone, च and, न not, तु but, माम् Me, अभिजानन्ति know, तत्त्वेन in essence (or in reality), अतः hence, च्यवन्ति fall, ते they.

24. (For) I alone am the enjoyer and also the Lord of all sacrifices; but they do not know Me in essence (in reality), and hence they fall (return to this mortal world).

Commentary: They do not know that I, the Supreme Self, am the enjoyer of all sacrifices enjoined in the Vedas and the Smritis (the codes of right conduct) and the Lord of all sacrifices. As I am the inner Ruler of this world I am the Lord of all sacrifices (*Vide* chapter VIII. 4—*Adhiyajnohamevatra:* I am the presiding deity of the sacrifice). I am at the beginning and at the end of every sacrifice and yet these people worship other gods. Therefore they worship in ignorance. As they worship other gods without recognising Me, and as they have not consecrated their actions to Me, they return to this mortal world after their merits are exhausted from the plane to which they had attained as the result of their sacrifices.

Those who are devoted to other gods and who worship Me in ignorance *(Avidhipurvakam)* also get the fruit of sacrifice. How? (*Cf.* V. 29; XV. 9)

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितॄन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥२५॥

यान्ति go, देवव्रताः worshippers of the gods, देवान् to the gods, पितॄन् to the Pitris or ancestors, यान्ति go, पितृव्रताः worshippers of the Pitris, भूतानि to the Bhutas, यान्ति go, भूतेज्याः the worshippers of the Bhutas, यान्ति go, मद्याजिनः My worshippers, अपि also, माम् to Me.

25. The worshippers of the gods go to them; to the manes go the ancestor-worshippers; to the deities who preside over the elements go their worshippers; but My devotees come to Me.

Commentary: The worshippers of the manes such as the Agnisvattas who perform Sraaddha and other rites in devotion to their ancestors go to the manes. Those who worship the gods with devotion and vows go to them.

Bhutas are 'elemental beings' lower than the gods but higher than human beings; they are the Vinayakas, the hosts of Matris, the four Bhaginis and the like.

Those who devote themselves to the gods attain the form of those gods at death. Similar is the fate of those who worship the manes (their own ancestors) or the Bhutas. The fruit of the worship is in accordance with the knowledge, faith, offering and nature of worship of the devotee.

Though the exertion is the same, people do not worship Me on account of their ignorance. Consequently they get very little reward.

My devotees obtain endless fruit. They do not come back to this mortal world. It is also easy for them to worship Me. How? (*Cf.* VII.23)

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ।।२६।।

पत्रम् a leaf, पुष्पम् a flower, फलम् a fruit, तोयम् water, यः who, मे to Me, भक्त्या with devotion, प्रयच्छति offers, तत् that, अहम् I, भक्त्युपहृतम् offered with devotion, अश्नामि eat (accept), प्रयतात्मनः of the pure-minded.

26. Whoever offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or a little water—that, so offered devotedly by the pure-minded, I accept.

Commentary: A gift, however small, is accepted by the Lord, when it is offered with profound faith. The Lord is quite satisfied even with a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, when it is offered with single-minded devotion and pure heart. Was He not satisfied with the little parched rice from the bundle of Sudama and the small berries offered by Sabari? You need not build a golden temple for Him. Build a golden temple in your heart. Enthrone Him there. He wants only your devoted heart. But it is difficult to please Indra. You will have to offer valuable (material) objects to him.

A leaf, a flower or a fruit are merely symbols. The true means of attaining the Lord is pure unflinching devotion. All the objects of the state belong to the king. If the servants of the state offer with devotion some objects to the king he is highly satisfied. Even so all the objects of the whole world belong to Him. Yet, He is highly pleased if you offer even a little thing with devotion.

Asnami, literally means 'eat'. The indicative meaning or Lakshana Vritti is 'accept'.

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ।।२७।।

यत् whatever, करोषि thou doest, यत् whatever, अश्नासि thou eatest, यत् whatever, जुहोषि thou offerest in sacrifice, ददासि thou givest, यत् whatever, यत् whatever, तपस्यसि thou practisest as austerity, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, तत् that, कुरुष्व do, मदर्पणम् offering unto Me.

27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest, whatever thou practisest as austerity, O Arjuna, do it as an offering unto Me.

Commentary: Consecrate all acts to the Lord. Then you will be freed from the bondage of Karma. You will have freedom in action. He who tries to live in the spirit of this verse will be able to do self-surrender unto the Lord. Gradually he ascends the spiritual path step by step. His greedy nature is slowly dissolved now. He always gives. He is not eager to take. His whole life with all its actions, thoughts and feelings, is dedicated to the service of the Lord eventually. He lives for the Lord only. He works for the Lord only. There is not a bit of egoism now. His whole nature is transformed into divinity. When actions are dedicated to the Lord, there is no rebirth for you. This is the simplest method of Yoga. Do not waste your time any longer. Take it up from today.

All actions, all results and all rewards will go to the Lord. There is no separate living for the individual. Just as the river joins the sea abandoning its own name and form so also the individual soul joins the Supreme Soul giving up his own name and form, his own egoistic desires and egoism. The individual will has become one with the cosmic will.

Whatever thou doest of thy own sweet will, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice as enjoined in the scriptures, whatever thou givest—such things as gold, rice, *ghee,* clothes, etc., to the Brahmins and others—whatever austerity such as the Chandrayana-Vrata (to destroy sin), control of the senses, etc., thou doest, do thou all these as an offering unto Me. (*Cf.* V. 32; XII. 6 and 8)

Now listen to what you will gain by doing thus.

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥२८॥

शुभाशुभफलैः from good and evil fruits, एवम् thus, मोक्ष्यसे (thou) shalt be freed, कर्मबन्धनैः from the bonds of actions, संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा

with the mind steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation, विमुक्तः liberated, माम् to Me, उपैष्यसि (thou) shalt come.

28. Thus shalt thou be freed from the bonds of actions yielding good and evil fruits; with the mind steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation, and liberated, thou shalt come unto Me.

Commentary: *Evam:* Thus—when you thus offer everything to Me.

Renunciation of the fruits of all works is Sannyasa. He who is equipped with the mind steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation is *Sannyasayogayuktatma.* The act of offering everything unto the Lord constitutes the Yoga of renunciation. It is also Yoga as it is an action. With the mind endowed with renunciation and Yoga thou shalt be freed from good and evil results while yet living and thou shalt come unto Me when this body falls.

An objector says, "Then the Lord has love and hatred as He confers His grace on His devotees only and not on others."

The answer is, "Not so. The Lord is impartial and is beyond love and hatred. His grace flows towards all. But the devotee receives it freely as he has opened his heart to the reception of His grace."

This is explained in the next verse.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ।।२९।।

समः the same, अहम् I, सर्वभूतेषु in all beings, न not, मे to Me, द्वेष्यः hateful, अस्ति is, न not, प्रियः dear, ये who, भजन्ति worship, तु but, माम् Me, भक्त्या with devotion, मयि in Me, ते they, तेषु in them, च and, अपि also, अहम् I.

29. The same am I to all beings: to Me there is none hateful or dear; but those who worship Me with devotion are in Me and I am also in them.

Commentary: The Lord has an even outlook towards all. He regards all living beings alike. None He has condemned, none has He favoured. He is the enemy of none. He is the partial lover of none. He does not favour some and frown on others. The egoistic man only has created a wide gulf between himself and the Supreme Being by his wrong attitude. The Lord is closer to him than his own breath, nearer than his hands and feet.

I am like fire. Just as fire removes cold from those who draw near it but does not remove the cold from those who keep away from it, even so I bestow My grace on My devotees but not owing to any sort of attachment on My part. Just as the light of the sun, though pervading everywhere, is reflected only in a clean mirror but not in a pot, so also I, the Supreme Lord, present everywhere, manifest Myself only in those persons from whose minds all kinds of impurities (which have accumulated there on account of ignorance) have been removed by their devotion.

The sun has neither attachment for the mirror nor hatred for the pot. The Kalpavriksha has neither hatred nor love for people. It bestows the desired objects only on those who go near it. *(Cf.* VII. 17; XII. 14 and 20)

Now hear the glory of devotion to Me.

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ।।३०।।

अपि even, चेत् if, सुदुराचारः a very wicked person, भजते worships, माम् Me, अनन्यभाक् with devotion to none else, साधुः righteous, एव verily, सः he, मन्तव्यः should be regarded, सम्यक् rightly, व्यवसितः resolved, हि indeed, सः he.

30. Even if the most sinful worships Me, with devotion to none else, he too should indeed be regarded as righteous for he has rightly resolved.

Commentary: Even if the most sinful worships Him with undivided heart, he too must indeed be deemed righteous for he has made the holy resolution to give up the evil ways of his life. Rogue Ratnakar became Valmiki by his holy resolution. Jagai and Madhai also became righteous devotees. Mary Magdalene, a woman of ill-fame, became a pious woman. Sin vanishes when thoughts of God arise in the mind. Chandrayana and Kricchra Vratas will remove only certain particular sins but the remembrance of the Lord, thoughts of the Supreme Being, Japa and meditation, and Abheda Brahma Chintana (contemplation of

Brahman with a non-dualistic or *Aham Brahmasmi* or *I am the Absolute* attitude) will destroy the sins committed by a person even in hundred crores of Kalpas or ages.

By abandoning the evil ways in his external life and by the force of his internal right resolution, he becomes righteous and attains eternal peace. (*Cf.* IV. 36)

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥३१॥

क्षिप्रम् soon, भवति (he) becomes, धर्मात्मा righteous, शश्वत् eternal, शान्तिम् peace, निगच्छति attains to, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti, प्रतिजानीहि proclaim for certain, न not, मे My, भक्तः Bhakta, प्रणश्यति perishes.

31. Soon he becomes righteous and attains to eternal peace; O Arjuna, proclaim thou for certain that My devotee never perishes.

Commentary: Listen, this is the truth, O Arjuna: you may proclaim that My devotee who has sincere devotion to Me, who has offered his inner soul to Me never perishes.

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥३२॥

माम् Me, हि indeed, पार्थ O Partha, व्यपाश्रित्य taking refuge in, ये who, अपि even, स्युः may be, पापयोनयः of sinful birth, स्त्रियः women, वैश्याः Vaisyas, तथा also, शूद्राः Sudras, ते they, अपि also, यान्ति attain, पराम् the Supreme, गतिम् Goal.

32. For, taking refuge in Me, they also who, O Arjuna, may be of a sinful birth—women, Vaisyas as well as Sudras—attain the Supreme Goal.

Commentary: Chandalas or outcastes are of a sinful birth. Women and Sudras are debarred by social rules from the study of the Vedas. What is wanted is devotion. There is no need for family traditions. The elephant Gajendra remembered Me with devotion and attained Me in spite of his being an animal. The lowest of the low and the vilest of the vile can attain Me if they have faith and devotion, if they sing and repeat My Name and if they think of Me always and think of no worldly object.

Prahlada was a demon and yet by his devotion forced Me to incarnate as Narasimha. Birth is immaterial. Devotion is everything. The Gopis attained Me through their devotion. Kamsa and Ravana attained Me through fear. Sisupala reached Me through hatred. Narada, Dhruva, Akrura, Suka, Sanatkumara and others attained Me through their devotion. Nandan, a man of low caste but a great devotee of Lord Siva, had direct vision of the Lord in Chidambaram in South India. Raidas, a cobbler, was a great devotee. In the spiritual life or in the Adhyatmic sphere all the external distinctions of caste, colour and creed disappear altogether. Shabari, though a Bhilni (a tribe) by birth, was a great devotee of Lord Rama.

Hindu scriptures are full of such instances. Hinduism does not restrict salvation to any one group or section of humanity. All can attain God if they have devotion.

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥३३॥

किम् पुनः how much more, ब्राह्मणाः Brahmins, पुण्याः holy, भक्ताः devoted, राजर्षयः royal saints, तथा also, अनित्यम् impermanent, असुखम् unhappy, लोकम् world, इमम् this, प्राप्य having obtained, भजस्व worship, माम् Me.

33. How much more (easily) then the holy Brahmins and devoted royal saints (attain the goal); having come to this impermanent and unhappy world, do thou worship Me.

Commentary: *Rajarshis* are kings who have become saints while discharging the duties of the kingdom.

It is very difficult to get a human birth which is the means of attaining the goal of life. Being born in this human body you should lead a life of devotion to the Lord. In the human body alone will you have the power to reflect (Vichara-Sakti), discrimination and dispassion. Even the gods envy the human birth.

This body is impermanent. It perishes soon. It brings pain of various sorts. So give up the efforts for securing happiness and comfort for this body. If you do not aim at Self-realisation even after attaining a human birth, you live in vain; you are wasting your life and you are a 'slayer of the Self'. You will again and again be caught in the wheel of birth and death.

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥३४॥

मन्मनाः with mind filled with Me, भव be thou, मद्भक्तः My devotee, मद्याजी sacrificing unto Me, माम् unto Me, नमस्कुरु bow down, माम् to Me, एव alone, एष्यसि thou shalt come, युक्त्वा having united, एवम् thus, आत्मानम् the self, मत्परायणः taking Me as the Supreme Goal.

34. Fix thy mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice unto Me; bow down to Me; having thus united thy whole self to Me, taking Me as the supreme goal, thou shalt come unto Me.

Commentary: Fill thy mind with Me. Fix your head, heart and hands on Me. Get your heart in tune with Me. Become a true worshipper. You will secure eternal bliss. Having known Me, you will cross beyond death.

The whole being of man should be surrendered to the Lord without reservation. Then the whole life will undergo a wonderful transformation. You will have the vision of God everywhere. All sorrows and pains will vanish. Your mind will be one with the divine consciousness.

Just as the pot-ether becomes one with the universal ether when the limiting adjunct (pot) is broken, just as the Ganga and the Yamuna, leaving their names and forms become one with the ocean, so also the sage gets rid of Avidya and all sorts of limiting adjuncts through the direct realisation of the Self and becomes identical with Para Brahman.

Yuktva means steadied in thought, having thus fixed the mind on the Lord, knowing that I am the Self of all beings and the highest goal. (*Cf.* V. 17; VII. 7, 14; XVIII. 65)

(This chapter is known by the name Adhyatma Yoga also.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगो नाम नवमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the ninth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Kingly Science and the Kingly Secret.

अथ दशमोऽध्यायः

TENTH DISCOURSE

विभूतियोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DIVINE GLORIES

श्री भगवानुवाच

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥१॥

भूयः again, एव verily, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, शृणु hear, मे My, परमम् supreme, वचः word, यत् which, ते to thee, अहम् I, प्रीयमाणाय who art beloved, वक्ष्यामि (I) will declare, हितकाम्यया wishing (thy) welfare.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. Again, O mighty-armed Arjuna, listen to My supreme word which I will declare to thee who art beloved, for thy welfare.

Commentary: I shall repeat what I said before (in the seventh and the ninth discourses). My essential nature and My manifestations have already been pointed out. As it is very difficult to understand the divine nature, I shall describe it once more to you, although it has been described already. I shall tell you of the divine glories and point out in which forms of being I should be thought of.

I will speak to you as you are delighted to hear Me. Now your heart is taking delight in Me.

The Lord wants to encourage Arjuna and cheer him up and so He Himself comes forward to give instructions to Arjuna even without his request.

Paramam Vachah: supreme word. *Paramam* means supreme, revealing the unsurpassed truth *(Niratisaya Vastu* which is Brahman).

O Arjuna! You are immensely delighted with My speech, as if you are drinking the immortalising nectar.

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥२॥

न not, मे My, विदुः know, सुरगणाः the hosts of gods, प्रभवम् origin, न not, महर्षयः the great sages, अहम् I, आदिः the beginning, हि for, देवानाम् of the gods, महर्षीणाम् of the great sages, च and, सर्वशः in every way.

2. Neither the hosts of the gods nor the great sages know My origin; for in every way I am the source of all the gods and the great sages.

Commentary: *Prabhavam:* Origin. It may also mean great lordly power.

Maharshis: great sages like Bhrigu.

As I am the source of all these gods, sages and living beings, it is very difficult for them to know Me.

Sarvasah: In every way—not only am I the source of all the gods and the sages but also their efficient cause, their inner ruler and the dispenser or ordainer and the guide of their intellect, etc.

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
असम्मूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥

यः who, माम् Me, अजम् unborn, अनादिम् beginningless, च and, वेत्ति knows, लोकमहेश्वरम् the great Lord of the worlds, असम्मूढः undeluded, सः he, मर्त्येषु amongst mortals, सर्वपापैः from all sins, प्रमुच्यते is liberated.

3. He who knows Me as unborn and beginningless, as the great Lord of the worlds, he, among mortals, is undeluded and he is liberated from all sins.

Commentary: As the Supreme Being is the cause of all the worlds, He is beginningless. As He is the source of the gods and the great sages, there is no source for His existence. As He is beginningless He is unborn. He is the great Lord of all the worlds.

Asammudhah: Undeluded. He who has realised that his own innermost Self is not different from the Supreme Self is an undeluded person. Through the removal of ignorance the delusion which is of the form of mutual superimposition between the Self and the not-Self is also removed. He is freed from all sins done consciously or unconsciously in the three periods of time.

The ignorant man removes his sins through the performance of expiatory acts (Prayaschitta) and enjoyment of the results. But he is not completely freed from all sins because he continues to do sinful actions through the force of evil Samskaras or impressions because he has not eradicated ignorance, the root cause of all sins, and its effect, egoism and superimposition or the feeling of 'I' in the physical body. As he dies, swayed by the forces of evil Samskaras, he engages himself in doing sinful actions in the next birth. But the sage of Self-realisation is completely liberated from all sins because ignorance, the root cause of all sins, and its effect, viz., the mistaken notion that the body is the Self on account of mutual superimposition between the Self and the not-Self, is eradicated *in toto* along with the Samskaras and all the sins. The Samskaras are burnt completely like roasted seeds. Just as burnt seeds cannot germinate, so also the burnt Samskaras cannot generate further actions or future births.

For the following reason also, I am the great Lord of the worlds.

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ।।४।।

बुद्धिः intellect, ज्ञानम् wisdom, असंमोहः non-delusion, क्षमा forgiveness, सत्यम् truth, दमः self-restraint, शमः calmness, सुखम् happiness, दुःखम् pain, भवः birth or existence, अभावः non-existence, भयम् fear, च and, अभयम् fearlessness, एव even, च and.

4. Intellect, wisdom, non-delusion, forgiveness, truth, self-restraint, calmness, happiness, pain, existence or birth, non-existence or death, fear and also fearlessness,

Commentary: Intellect is the power which the Antahkarana (the fourfold inner instrument—the mind, the subconscious mind, intellect and egoism) has of understanding subtle objects. Wisdom is knowledge of the Self. Non-delusion is freedom from illusion. It consists in acting with discrimination when anything has to be done or known at the moment. Patience is the non-agitation of the mind when assaulted or abused. Not thinking of any harm or evil for those who have assaulted or abused is also patience. Patience is enduring without lamentation the three kinds of pains, Adhyatmika, Adhidaivika and Adhibhautika Taapas. Fever, etc., is Adhyatmika pain. Pain or discomfort from severe cold, heat, too much rain, thunder, and lightning is Adhidaivika pain. Pain from scorpion-sting, snake-bite, and wild animals is Adhibhautika pain.

Satyam or truth is veracity. It is speaking of one's own actual or real experience of things as actually heard or seen. There is not the least twisting or exaggeration or the slightest modification of facts. Dama or self-restraint is control of the external senses. It is withdrawal of the senses (ear, skin, eyes, tongue and nose) from their respective objects (viz., sound, touch, form, palatable foods and fragrance). Sama is calmness or tranquillity of the mind produced by checking the mind from thinking of external objects of the senses and by disconnecting it from the senses.

Sukham: Happiness. That which has Dharma or virtue as its chief cause and that which is favourable to all beings, is happiness. *Duhkham:* That which has Adharma as its cause and that which is unfavourable to all beings, is pain.

That which appears is *Bhavah.* Sat is Bhavah. Asat or unreality is *Abhavah.*

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥५॥

अहिंसा non-injury, समता equanimity, तुष्टिः contentment, तपः austerity, दानम् beneficence, यशः fame, अयशः ill-fame, भवन्ति arise, भावाः qualities, भूतानाम् of beings, मत्तः from Me, एव alone, पृथग्विधाः of different kinds.

5. Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, beneficence, fame, ill-fame—(these) different kinds of qualities of beings arise from Me alone.

Commentary: *Ahimsa* is non-injury to living beings in thought, word and deed. *Samata* is that state wherein there is neither Raga (like) nor Dvesha (dislike), when one gets pleasant or unpleasant objects. There is neither exhilaration when one gets pleasant or favourable objects nor depression when one gets unpleasant or unfavourable objects. *Tushtih* is satisfaction or contentment. The man of contentment is satisfied with whatever object he gets through Prarabdha. He is satisfied with his present acquisitions. He is free from greed and so he has peace of mind. Contentment makes a man very rich. It annihilates greed. Greed makes even a rich man a beggar of beggars. A greedy man is ever restless. *Tapas* is restraint of the senses, with bodily mortification through the practice of fasting and slow reduction of food. The strength of the body and the senses is reduced through fasting.

Danam is beneficence. It is sharing of one's own things with others according to one's own means, or distribution of rice, gold, cloth, etc., to a worthy person, in a fit place and time, especially to one who can do nothing in return.

Yasas is fame due to Dharma or virtuous actions.

Ayasah is ill-fame or disgrace due to Adharma or sinful actions.

All these different kinds of qualities of living beings arise from Me alone, the great Lord of the worlds, according to their respective Karmas.

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ।।६।।

महर्षयः the great Rishis, सप्त seven, पूर्वे ancient, चत्वारः four, मनवः Manus, तथा also, मद्भावाः possessed of powers like Me, मानसाः from mind, जाताः born, येषाम् from whom, लोके in world, इमाः these, प्रजाः creatures.

6. The seven great sages, the ancient four and also the Manus, possessed of powers like Me (on account of their minds

being fixed on Me), were born of (My) mind; from them are these creatures born in this world.

Commentary: In the beginning I was alone and from Me came the mind and from the mind were produced the seven sages (such as Bhrigu, Vasishtha and others), the ancient four Kumaras (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata), as well as the four Manus of the past ages known as Savarnis, all of whom directed their thoughts to Me exclusively and were therefore endowed with divine powers and supreme wisdom.

The four Kumaras (chaste, ascetic youths) declined to marry and create offspring. They preferred to remain perpetual celibates and to practise Brahma-Vichara or profound meditation on Brahman or the Absolute.

They were all created by Me, by mind alone. They were all mind-born sons of Brahma. They were not born from the womb like ordinary mortals. *Manavah,* men, the present inhabitants of this world, are the sons of Manu. The Manus are the mind-born sons of God. These creatures which consist of the moving and the unmoving beings are born of the seven great sages and the four Manus. The great sages were original teachers of Brahma-Vidya or the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads. The Manus were the rulers of men. They framed the code or rules of conduct or the laws of Dharma for the guidance and uplift of humanity.

The seven great sages represent the seven planes also. In the macrocosm, Mahat or cosmic Buddhi, Ahamkara or the cosmic egoism and the five Tanmatras or the five root-elements of which the five great elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether are the gross forms, represent the seven great sages. This gross universe with the moving and the unmoving beings and the subtle inner world have come out of the above seven principles. In mythology or the Puranic terminology these seven principles have been symbolised and given human names. Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha are the seven great sages.

In the microcosm, Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (subconsciousness) and Ahamkara (egoism) have been symbolised as the four Manus and given human names. The first group forms the base of the macrocosm. The second group forms the base of the microcosm (individuals). These two groups constitute this vast universe of sentient life.

Madbhava: with their being in Me, of My nature.

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥७॥

एताम् this, विभूतिम् (manifold) manifestation of My Being, योगम् Yoga power, च and, मम Mine, यः who, वेत्ति knows, तत्त्वतः in truth, सः he, अविकम्पेन unshakable, योगेन with Yoga, युज्यते becomes united, न not, अत्र here, संशयः doubt.

7. He who in truth knows these manifold manifestations of My Being and (this) Yoga-power of Mine becomes established in the unshakable Yoga; there is no doubt about it.

Commentary: Knowledge of the glory of the Lord is really conducive to Yoga. He who knows in essence the immanent pervading power of the Lord by which He causes the manifestations, and His diverse manifestations (Vibhutis), unites with Him in firm unalterable Yoga and attains eternal bliss and perfect harmony. From the ant to the Creator there is nothing except the Lord. He who knows in reality this extensive manifestation of the Lord and His Yoga (Yoga here stands for what is born of Yoga, viz., infinite Yogic powers as well as omniscience), is endowed with firm unwavering Yoga. He lives in the Eternal and is endowed with the highest knowledge of the Self. He who has realised this Truth is free from the superiority and inferiority complexes. There is real awakening of wisdom in him. He will behold the Lord in all beings and all beings in the Lord. He will never hate any creature on this earth. This is a rare living cosmic experience. The Yogi realises that the Lord and His manifestations are one. He attains the supreme goal and is absorbed in Him through his wholehearted devotion. He is perfectly aware of his oneness with the Supreme by My divine Yoga.

He can keep his balance of mind now in whatever environments and circumstances he is placed and can do any action without losing his consciousness of oneness or identity with the Supreme Self. (*Cf.* VII. 25; IX .5; XI. 8)

What is that unshaken Yoga with which they are endowed?

The answer follows.

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥८॥

अहम् I, सर्वस्य of all, प्रभवः the source, मत्तः from Me, सर्वम् everything, प्रवर्तते evolves, इति thus, मत्वा understanding, भजन्ते worship, माम् Me, बुधाः the wise, भावसमन्विताः endowed with meditation.

8. I am the source of all; from Me everything evolves; understanding thus, the wise, endowed with meditation, worship Me.

Commentary: Waves originate in water, depend on water and dissolve in water. The only support for the waves is water. Even so the only support for the whole world is the Lord. Realising this, feeling the omnipresence of the Lord, the wise worship Him with devotion and affection in all places. The Supreme is the same in all countries and at all times. He is the material and the efficient cause.

As Mulaprakriti or Avyaktam the Lord is the source of all forms. The Lord is the *primum mobile.* He gazes at His Sakti (creative power) and the whole world evolves and the forms move. The worldly man who has neither sharp nor subtle intellect beholds the changing forms only through the fleshly eyes. He has no idea of the Indwelling Presence, the substratum, the all-pervading intelligence or the blissful consciousness. He is allured by the passing forms. He fixes his hopes and joy on these transitory forms. He lives and exerts for them. He rejoices when he gets a wife and children. If these forms pass away he is drowned in sorrow. But the wise ones constantly dwell in the Supreme, the source and the life of all, and enjoy the eternal bliss of the immortal, inner Self, their own non-dual Atman, albeit all these forms around them change and pass away. They are steadfast in Yoga. They are endowed with unshakable Yoga. They are enthroned in Yoga. They worship the Supreme in contemplation and enjoy the indescribable bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Para Brahman, known as Vaasudeva, is the source of the whole world. From Him alone evolves the whole world with all its changes, viz., existence (Sthiti), destruction (Nasa), action (Kriya), fruit (Phala) and enjoyment (Bhoga). Understanding thus, the wise adore the Supreme Being and engage themselves in profound meditation on the Absolute. (*Cf.* IX. 10)

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥९॥

मच्चित्ताः with their minds wholly in Me, मद्गतप्राणाः with their life absorbed in Me, बोधयन्तः enlightening, परस्परम् mutually, कथयन्तः speaking of, च and, माम् Me, नित्यम् always, तुष्यन्ति are satisfied, च and, रमन्ति (they) are delighted, च and.

9. With their mind and their life wholly absorbed in Me, enlightening each other and ever speaking of Me, they are satisfied and delighted.

Commentary: The characteristics of a devotee who has attained the realisation of oneness are described in this verse. The devotee constantly thinks of the Lord. His very life is absorbed in Him. He has consecrated his whole life to the Lord. According to another interpretation, all his senses (which function because of the Prana), such as the eye are absorbed in Him. He takes immense delight in talking about Him, about His supreme wisdom, power, might and other attributes. He has completely dedicated himself to the Lord.

He feels intense satisfaction and is delighted as if he is in the company of his Beloved (God). The Purana says, "The sum total of the sensual pleasures of this world and also all the great pleasures of the divine regions (heavens) are not worth a sixteenth part of that bliss which proceeds from the eradication of desires and cravings." (*Cf.* XII. 8)

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥१०॥

तेषाम् to them, सततयुक्तानाम् ever steadfast, भजताम् (of the) worshipping, प्रीतिपूर्वकम् with love, ददामि (I) give, बुद्धियोगम् Yoga of discrimination, तम् that, येन by which, माम् to Me, उपयान्ति come, ते they.

10. To them who are ever steadfast, worshipping Me with love, I give the Yoga of discrimination by which they come to Me.

Commentary: The devotees who have dedicated themselves to the Lord, who are ever harmonious and self-abiding, who are ever devout and who adore Him with intense love (not for attaining any selfish purpose), obtain the divine grace. The Lord gives them wisdom or the Yoga of discrimination or understanding by which they attain the knowledge of the Self. The Lord bestows on these devotees who have fixed their thoughts on Him alone, "devotion of right knowledge" (*Buddhi Yoga*) by which they know Him in essence. They know through the eye of intuition in deep meditation the Supreme Lord, the One in all, the Self of all, as their own Self, destitute of all limitations. Buddhi here is the inner eye of intuition by which the magnificent experience of oneness is had. Buddhi Yoga is Jnana Yoga. (*Cf.* IV. 39; XII. 6 and 7)

Why does the Lord impart this Yoga of knowledge to His devotees? What obstacles does the Buddhi Yoga remove on the path of the aspirant or devotee? The Lord gives the answer in the following verse.

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ।।११।।

तेषाम् for them, एव mere, अनुकम्पार्थम् out of compassion, अहम् I, अज्ञानजम् born of ignorance, तमः darkness, नाशयामि (I) destroy, आत्मभावस्थः dwelling within their self, ज्ञानदीपेन by the lamp of knowledge, भास्वता luminous.

11. Out of mere compassion for them, I, dwelling within their Self, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the luminous lamp of knowledge.

Commentary: *Luminous lamp of knowledge:* The Lord dwells in the heart of the devotees who constantly think of Him and destroys the veil or the darkness born of ignorance due to the absence of discrimination, by the luminous lamp of knowledge fed by the oil of pure devotion, fanned by the wind of profound meditation on Him, provided with the wick of right intuition, generated by the constant cultivation of celibacy, piety and other divine virtues held in the chambers of the heart free from worldliness, placed in the innermost recesses of the mind free from the wind of sense-attractions (withdrawn from the objects of the senses) and untainted by likes and dislikes, and shining with the light of knowledge of the Self caused by the constant practice of meditation.

The lamp is not in need of an instrument or means or any sort of practice for the removal of darkness. The generation of the light itself is quite sufficient to remove the darkness. As soon as the darkness is removed by the light, the pot, the chair and the other articles are seen. Even so the dawn of knowledge of the Self itself is quite sufficient to remove ignorance. No other Karma or practice is necessary. After the ignorance is removed by the knowledge of the Self, Brahman alone shines in Its pristine glory.

अर्जुन उवाच

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥१२॥

परम् supreme, ब्रह्म Brahman, परम् supreme, धाम abode, पवित्रम् purifier, परमम् supreme, भवान् Thou, पुरुषम् Purusha, शाश्वतम् eternal, दिव्यम् divine, आदिदेवम् primeval God, अजम् unborn, विभुम् omnipresent.

Arjuna said:

12. Thou art the Supreme Brahman, the supreme abode (or the supreme light), the supreme purifier, eternal, divine Person, the primeval God, unborn and omnipresent.

Commentary: *Param Brahma:* The highest Self. The word *Param* indicates the pure and attributeless Absolute, free from the limiting adjuncts. It is Satchidananda Brahman. The 'inferior Brahman' is the Brahman with qualities (Saguna) or Isvara, Brahman with the limiting adjuncts or the chosen object of meditation by the devotees.

Param Dhama means Param Tejah or the supreme light. From the Creator down to the blade of grass the Supreme Being is the support or substratum. Therefore He is known as the supreme abode.

Adideva: The primeval God or the original God Who existed before all other gods. This God is Para Brahman Itself. It is self-luminous.

Pavitram Paramam: Supreme purifier. The sacred rivers and holy places of pilgrimage can remove only the sins; but Para Brahman can destroy all sins and ignorance, the root cause of all sins. Therefore Para Brahman or the Supreme Self is the supreme purifier.

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा ।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ।।१३।।

आहुः (they) declared, त्वाम् Thee, ऋषयः the Rishis, सर्वे all, देवर्षिः Devarshi, नारदः Narada, तथा also, असितः Asita, देवलः Devala, व्यासः Vyasa, स्वयम् Thyself, च and, एव even, ब्रवीषि (Thou) sayest, मे to me.

13. All the sages have thus declared Thee, as also the divine sage Narada; so also Asita, Devala and Vyasa; and now Thou Thyself sayest so to me.

Commentary: *Rishi* is a holy sage of disciplined mind and senses.

Devarshi: A divine sage more highly evolved than a Rishi.

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन् व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ।।१४।।

सर्वम् all, एतत् this, ऋतम् true, मन्ये (I) think, यत् which, माम् to me, वदसि (Thou) sayest, केशव O Krishna, न not, हि verily, ते Thy, भगवन् O blessed Lord, व्यक्तिम् manifestation, विदुः know, देवाः gods, न not, दानवाः demons.

14. I believe all this that Thou sayest to me to be true, O Krishna; verily, O blessed Lord! neither the gods nor the demons know Thy manifestation (origin).

Commentary: *Bhagavan* is He, in whom ever exist the six attributes in their fullness, viz., Jnana (wisdom), Vairagya (dispassion), Aisvarya (lordship), Dharma (virtue), Sri (wealth) and Bala (omnipotence). Also, He Who knows the origin, dissolution and the future of all beings and Who is omniscient, is called Bhagavan.

Vyakti: Origin.

Danavah: Demons or the Titans.

Arjuna addresses the Lord as Keshava (Lord of all) because the Lord knows what is going on in his mind, as He is omniscient. As the Lord is the source of the gods, the demons and others, they cannot comprehend His manifestation or origin. (*Cf.* IV. 6)

स्वयमेवात्मनाऽत्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥१५॥

स्वयम् Thyself, एव only, आत्मना by Thyself, आत्मानम् Thyself, वेत्थ (Thou) knowest, त्वम् Thou, पुरुषोत्तम O Purusha Supreme, भूतभावन O source of beings, भूतेश O Lord of beings, देवदेव O God of gods, जगत्पते O ruler of the world.

15. Verily, Thou Thyself knowest Thyself by Thyself, O Supreme Person, O source and Lord of beings, O God of gods, O ruler of the world!

Commentary: *Purushottama* means the best among all Purushas. He assumes the four forms, viz., the source of beings, the Lord of beings, God of gods and ruler of the world. Hence He is called Purushottama.

Devadeva is He who is worshipped even by Indra and other gods.

Jagatpati: The Lord protects the world and guides the people through the instructions given in the Vedas. Hence the name 'ruler of the world'.

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ।।१६।।

वक्तुम् to tell, अर्हसि (Thou) shouldst, अशेषेण without remainder, दिव्याः divine, हि indeed, आत्मविभूतयः Thy glories, याभिः by which, विभूतिभिः by glories, लोकान् worlds, इमान् these, त्वम् Thou, व्याप्य having pervaded, तिष्ठसि existest.

16. Thou shouldst indeed tell, without reserve, of Thy divine glories by which Thou existest, pervading all these worlds. (None else can do so.)

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ।।१७।।

कथम् how, विद्याम् shall know, अहम् I, योगिन् O Yogin, त्वाम् Thee, सदा always, परिचिन्तयन् meditating, केषु केषु in what and what, च and, भावेषु aspects, चिन्त्यः to be thought of, असि (Thou) art, भगवन् O blessed Lord, मया by me.

17. How shall I, ever meditating, know Thee, O Yogin? In what aspects or things, O blessed Lord, art Thou to be thought of by me?

Commentary: Arjuna says: "O Lord, how may I know Thee by constant meditation? In what aspects art Thou to be thought of by me? Even when I think of external objects I can meditate on Thee in Thy particular manifestations in them if I have a detailed knowledge of Thy glories. Therefore deign to tell me, without reserve, of Thy own glories. Then only can I behold oneness everywhere."

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ।।१८।।

विस्तरेण in detail, आत्मनः Thy, योगम् Yoga, विभूतिम् glory, च and, जनार्दन O Janardana, भूयः again, कथय tell, तृप्तिः contentment, हि for, शृण्वतः (of) hearing, न not, अस्ति is, मे of me, अमृतम् nectar.

18. Tell me again in detail, O Krishna, of Thy Yogic power and glory; for I am not satiated with what I have heard of Thy life-giving and nectar-like speech.

Commentary: The Lord is called *Janardana* because all pray to Him for worldly success, prosperity and also salvation. Arjuna also prays to the Lord to explain His Yogic power and glory, for his salvation.

Arjuna says to Lord Krishna: "Tell me in detail of Thy mysterious power (Yoga) and sovereignty (Aisvarya) and the various things to be meditated upon. Tell me again though You have described earlier in the seventh and the ninth chapters succinctly; for there is no satiety in hearing Thy ambrosial speech or nectar-like conversation. However much of it I hear, I am not satisfied; surely it is nectar of immortality for me."

श्री भगवानुवाच

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥१९॥

हन्त now, very well, ते to thee, कथयिष्यामि (I) will declare, दिव्याः divine, हि indeed, आत्मविभूतयः My glories, प्राधान्यतः in their prominence, कुरुश्रेष्ठ O best of the Kurus, न not, अस्ति is, अन्तः end, विस्तरस्य of detail, मे of Me.

The Blessed Lord said:

19. Very well! Now I will declare to thee My divine glories in their prominence, O Arjuna; there is no end to their detailed description.

Commentary: Now I will tell you of My most prominent divine glories. My glories are illimitable; it is not possible to describe all of them.

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥२०॥

अहम् I, आत्मा the Self, गुडाकेश O Gudakesa, सर्वभूताशयस्थितः seated in the hearts of all beings, अहम् I, आदिः the beginning, च and, मध्यम् the middle, च and, भूतानाम् of (all) beings, अन्तः the end, एव even, च and.

20. I am the Self, O Gudakesa, seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of all beings.

Commentary: O Gudakesa! I am the soul (Pratyagatma) which exists in the hearts of all beings and I am also the source or origin, the middle or stay, and the end of all created beings. I am the birth, the life and the death of all beings. Meditate on Me as the innermost Self.

Gudakesa means either 'conqueror of sleep' or 'thick-haired'.

He who is able to meditate on the Self with Abheda Bhavana (attitude of non-duality), is a qualified aspirant (Adhikari) of the first class. He who is not able to meditate on the Self should think of the Lord in those things which are mentioned below. This type of meditation is for the aspirants of the middle class.

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥२१॥

आदित्यानाम् among the Adityas, अहम् I, विष्णुः Vishnu, ज्योतिषाम् among lights, रविः the sun, अंशुमान् radiant, मरीचिः Marichi, मरुताम् of the Maruts (winds), अस्मि (I) am, नक्षत्राणाम् among the stars, अहम् I, शशी the moon.

21. Among the (twelve) Adityas, I am Vishnu; among luminaries, the radiant sun; I am Marichi among the (seven or forty-nine) Maruts; among stars the moon am I.

Commentary: Of the twelve Adityas I am the Aditya known as Vishnu. Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Rudra, Varuna, Bhaga, Surya, Vivasvan, Pushan, Savita, Tvashta and Vishnu are the twelve Adityas. The twelve months of the year are the Adityas.

The Maruts are the gods controlling the winds. Some hold that there are seven of them while others say there are forty-nine.

The twelve Adityas, the luminaries like Agni, lightning, etc., the Maruts, the stars, etc., are the Samanya Vibhutis (ordinary manifestations) of the Lord. Vishnu, the sun, Marichi, and the moon are His Visesha Vibhutis (special manifestations) and hence they have greater splendour in them.

You can superimpose the Lord on the sun and the moon, and meditate on them as forms of the Lord. You can practise the same kind of meditation on all forms mentioned in the following verses of this chapter.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥२२॥

वेदानाम् among the Vedas, सामवेदः the Sama Veda, अस्मि (I) am, देवानाम् among the gods, अस्मि (I) am, वासवः Indra, इन्द्रियाणाम् among the senses, मनः mind, च and, अस्मि (I) am, भूतानाम् among living beings, अस्मि (I) am, चेतना intelligence.

22. Among the Vedas I am the Sama-Veda; I am Vasava among the gods; among the senses I am the mind; and I am intelligence among living beings.

Commentary: *Vasava* is Indra.

Gods: Such as Rudras, Adityas.

Indriyas: The five Jnana-Indriyas or organs of knowledge, viz., ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose; and the five Karma-Indriyas or organs of action, viz., speech, hands, feet, genitals and anus. The mind is regarded as the eleventh sense. As the senses cannot function without the help of the mind, the mind is regarded as the chief among the senses.

Chetana: Intelligence is that state of intellect which is manifest in the aggregate of the body and the senses.

That which illumines all, from the intellect down to the grossest object, is called Chetana.

रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥२३॥

रुद्राणाम् among the Rudras, शङ्करः Sankara, च and, अस्मि (I) am, वित्तेशः Kubera, यक्षरक्षसाम् among celestial fairies and spirits, वसूनाम् among Vasus, पावकः Pavaka, च and, अस्मि (I) am, मेरुः Meru, शिखरिणाम् of mountains, अहम् I.

23. And, among the Rudras I am Sankara; among the Yakshas and Rakshasas, the Lord of wealth (Kubera); among the Vasus I am Pavaka (fire); and among the (seven) mountains I am the Meru.

Commentary: *Rudras* are eleven in number. The ten vital airs (Pranas and the Upa-Pranas, which are five each) and the mind are the eleven Rudras. They are so called because they produce grief when they depart from the body. They have been symbolised in the Puranas as follows: Virabhadra, Sankara, Girisa, Ajaikapati, Bhuvanadhisvara, Aherbhujya, Pinaki, Aparajita, Kapali, Sthanu and Bhaga. Among these Rudras, Sankara is regarded as the chief.

Vasus are earth, water, fire, air, ether, sun, moon and stars. They are so called because they comprehend the whole universe within them. They have been symbolised in the Puranas as follows: Apah, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusa and Prabhasa. Of these Anala or Pavaka (fire) is the chief.

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥२४॥

पुरोधसाम् among the household priests, च and, मुख्यम् the chief, माम् Me, विद्धि know, पार्थ O Partha, बृहस्पतिम् Brihaspati, सेनानीनाम् among generals, अहम् I, स्कन्दः Skanda, सरसाम् among lakes, अस्मि (I) am, सागरः the ocean.

24. And, among the household priests (of kings), O Arjuna, know Me to be the chief, Brihaspati; among the army generals I am Skanda; among lakes I am the ocean.

Commentary: *Brihaspati* is the chief priest of the gods. He is the household priest of Indra.

Skanda is Kartikeya or Lord Subrahmanya. He is the general of the hosts of the gods.

Of things holding water—natural reservoirs or lakes—I am the ocean.

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥२५॥

महर्षीणाम् among the great Rishis, भृगुः Bhrigu, अहम् I, गिराम् among words, अस्मि (I) am, एकम् the one, अक्षरम् syllable, यज्ञानाम् among sacrifices, जपयज्ञः the sacrifice of silent repetition, अस्मि (I) am, स्थावराणाम् among immovable things, हिमालयः Himalayas.

25. Among the great sages I am Bhrigu; among words I am the one syllable (Om); among sacrifices I am the sacrifice of silent repetition; among the immovable things I am the Himalayas.

Commentary: Manu has said: "Whatever else the Brahmana may or may not do, he attains salvation by Japa (silent repetition of a Mantra) alone."

Bhrigu is one of the mind-born sons of the Creator.

Himalaya: The highest mountain range in the world.

Japayajna: There is neither injury nor loss in this Yajna. Therefore, it is regarded as the best of all Yajnas.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥२६॥

अश्वत्थः Asvattha, सर्ववृक्षाणाम् among all trees, देवर्षीणाम् among Divine Rishis, च and, नारदः Narada, गन्धर्वाणाम् among Gandharvas, चित्ररथः Chitraratha, सिद्धानाम् among the Siddhas or the perfected, कपिलः Kapila, मुनिः sage.

26. Among all the trees (I am) the Peepul; among the divine sages, I am Narada; among Gandharvas, Chitraratha; among the perfected, the sage Kapila.

Commentary: *Devarshis* are gods and at the same time Rishis or seers of Mantras.

Siddhas are the perfected ones: those who at their very birth attained without any effort Dharma (virtue), Jnana (knowledge of the Self), Vairagya (dispassion) and Aisvarya (lordship).

Muni is one who does Manana or reflection; one who meditates.

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥२७॥

उच्चैःश्रवसम् Ucchaisravas, अश्वानाम् among horses, विद्धि know, माम् Me, अमृतोद्भवम् born of nectar, ऐरावतम् Airavata, गजेन्द्राणाम् among lordly elephants, नराणाम् among men, च and, नराधिपम् the king.

27. Know Me as Ucchaisravas born of nectar, among horses; among lordly elephants (I am) the Airavata; and, among men, the king.

Commentary: Nectar was obtained by the gods by churning the ocean of milk. *Ucchaisravas* is the name of the royal horse which was born in that ocean of milk when it was churned for the nectar.

Airavatam: The offspring of Iravati, the elephant of Indra born at the time when the ocean of milk was churned.

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥२८॥

आयुधानाम् among weapons, अहम् I, वज्रम् the thunderbolt, धेनूनाम् among cows, अस्मि (I) am, कामधुक् Kamadhenu, the heavenly cow which yields all desires, प्रजनः the progenitor, च and, अस्मि (I) am, कन्दर्पः Kandarpa (Kamadeva), सर्पाणाम् among serpents, अस्मि (I) am, वासुकिः Vasuki.

28. Among weapons I am the thunderbolt; among cows I am the wish-fulfilling cow called Kamadhenu; I am the progenitor, the god of love; among serpents I am Vasuki.

Commentary: *Vajram:* the thunderbolt weapon made of the bones of Dadhichi; an implement of warfare which can only be handled by Indra who has finished a hundred sacrifices.

Kamadhuk: The cow Kamadhenu of the great sage Vasishtha which yielded all the desired objects, also born of the ocean of milk.

Kandarpa: Cupid.

Vasuki: The Lord of hoodless or ordinary serpents.

Sarpa (serpent) has only one head. *Vasuki* is yellow-coloured. Nagas have many heads. Ananta is fire-coloured.

Sridhara says that the 'Sarpa' is poisonous and the 'Naga' is non-poisonous. Sri Ramanuja says that 'Sarpa' has only one head and 'Naga' has many heads.

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितॄणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥२९।

अनन्तः Ananta, च and, अस्मि (I) am, नागानाम् among Nagas, वरुणः Varuna, यादसाम् among water-gods, अहम् I, पितॄणाम् among the Pitris or ancestors, अर्यमा Aryaman, च and, अस्मि (I) am, यमः Yama, संयमताम् among governors, अहम् I.

29. I am Ananta among the Nagas; I am Varuna among water-deities; Aryaman among the Manes I am; I am Yama among the governors.

Commentary: *Ananta* is the king of hooded serpents or cobras. He is fire-coloured.

Varuna is the king of the water-gods.

Water-deities: The gods connected with waters.

Aryaman is the king of the manes.

I am *Yama,* the witness of the acts of all living beings, who keeps account of the good and bad actions of the people.

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।
मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥३०॥

प्रह्लादः Prahlada, च and, अस्मि (I) am, दैत्यानाम् among demons, कालः time, कलयताम् among reckoners, अहम् I, मृगाणाम् among beasts, च and, मृगेन्द्रः lion, अहम् I, वैनतेयः son of Vinata (Garuda), च and, पक्षिणाम् among birds.

30. And, I am Prahlada among the demons; among the reckoners I am time; among beasts I am the lion, and Vainateya (Garuda) among birds.

Commentary: Prahlada, though he was the son of a demon (Hiranyakasipu), was a great devotee of the Lord.

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।
झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥३१॥

पवनः the wind, पवताम् among purifiers or the speeders, अस्मि (I) am, रामः Rama, शस्त्रभृताम् among wielders of weapons (warriors), अहम् I, झषाणाम् among fishes, मकरः Makara (shark), च and, अस्मि (I) am, स्रोतसाम् among streams, अस्मि (I) am, जाह्नवी the Ganga.

31. Among the purifiers (or the speeders) I am the wind; Rama among the warriors am I; among the fishes I am the shark; among the streams I am the Ganga.

Commentary: The holy river Ganga (spelt Ganges in English) was swallowed by Jahnu when she was being brought down by Bhagiratha from heaven. Hence the name Jahnavi for Ganga.

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥३२॥

सर्गाणाम् among creations, आदिः the beginning, अन्तः the end, च and, मध्यम् the middle, च and, एव also, अहम् I, अर्जुन O Arjuna, अध्यात्मविद्या the science of the Self, विद्यानाम् among sciences, वादः logic, प्रवदताम् among controversialists, अहम् I.

32. Among creations I am the beginning, the middle and also the end, O Arjuna; among the sciences I am the science of the Self; and I am the logic among controversialists.

Commentary: I am the metaphysics among all sciences. I am knowledge of the Self among all branches of knowledge. I am the argument of debators. I am the logic of disputants. I am the speech of orators.

In verse 20 above the Lord says, "I am the beginning, the middle and the end of the whole movable and immovable creation." Here the whole creation in general is referred to.

As the knowledge of the Self leads to the attainment of the final beatitude of life or salvation, it is the chief among all branches of knowledge.

Pravadatam: By the word *controversialists,* we should here understand the various kinds of people using various kinds of argumentation in logic such as Vada, Jalpa and Vitanda. Vada is a way of arguing by which one gets at the truth of a certain question. The aspirants who are free from Raga-Dvesha and jealousy raise amongst themselves questions and answers and enter into discussions on philosophical problems in order to ascertain and understand the nature of the Truth. They do not argue in order to gain victory over one another. This is Vada. Jalpa is wrangling in which one asserts his own opinion and refutes that of his opponent. Vitanda is idle carping at the arguments of one's opponents. No attempt is made to establish the other side of the question. In Jalpa and Vitanda one tries to defeat another. There is desire for victory.

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताऽहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥३३॥

अक्षराणाम् among letters, अकारः the letter A, अस्मि (I) am, द्वन्द्वः the dual, सामासिकस्य among all compounds, च and, अहम् I, एव verily, अक्षयः the inexhaustible or everlasting, कालः time, धाता the dispenser, अहम् I, विश्वतोमुखः the All-faced (or having faces in all directions).

33. Among the letters of the alphabets, the letter 'A' I am and the dual among the compounds. I am verily the inexhaustible or everlasting time; I am the dispenser (of the fruits of actions) having faces in all directions.

Commentary: Among the alphabets I am the letter 'A'. Among the various kinds of compounds used in Sanskrit language I am the Dvandva (union of the two), the copulative.

Time here refers to the moment, the ultimate element of time or to Paramesvara, the Supreme Lord Who is the *time of even time,* since He is beyond time.

As the Supreme Being is all-pervading it is said that He has faces in all directions.

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।
कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥३४॥

मृत्युः death, सर्वहरः all-devouring, च and, अहम् I, उद्भवः the prosperity, च and, भविष्यताम् of those who are to be prosperous, कीर्तिः fame, श्रीः prosperity, वाक् speech, च and, नारीणाम् of the feminine, स्मृतिः the memory, मेधा intelligence, धृतिः firmness, क्षमा forgiveness.

34. And I am the all-devouring Death, and the prosperity of those who are to be prosperous; among the feminine qualities (I am) fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, firmness and forgiveness.

Commentary: I am also the all-snatching death that destroys everything. Death is of two kinds, viz., he who seizes wealth and he who seizes life. Of them he who seizes life is the all-seizer: and hence he is called *Sarvaharah.* I am he.

Or, there is another interpretation. I am the Supreme Lord Who is the all-seizer, because I destroy everything at the time of the cosmic dissolution.

I am the origin of all the beings to be born in the future. I am the prosperity and the means of achieving it of those who are fit to attain it.

Beauty is *Sri.* Lustre is *Sri.* I am *fame,* the best of the feminine qualities. People who have attained slight fame think that they have achieved great success in life and that they have become very big or great men. I am *speech* which adorns the throne of justice. I am *memory* which recalls objects and pleasures of the past.

The power of the mind which enables one to hold the teachings of the scriptures is *Medha.* Firmness or *Dhriti* is the power to keep the body and the senses steady even amidst various kinds of sufferings. The power to keep oneself unattached even while doing actions is *Dhriti.* It also means courage. *Kshama* also means endurance.

Fame, prosperity, memory, intelligence and firmness are the daughters of Daksha. They had been given in marriage to Dharma and so they are all called Dharmapatnis.

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥३५॥

बृहत्साम Brihatsaman, तथा also, साम्नाम् among Sama hymns, गायत्री Gayatri, छन्दसाम् among metres, अहम् I, मासानाम् among months, मार्गशीर्षः Margasirsha, अहम् I, ऋतूनाम् among seasons, कुसुमाकरः the flowery season (spring).

35. Among the hymns also I am the Brihatsaman; among metres Gayatri am I; among the months I am the Margasirsha; among the seasons (I am) the flowery season.

Commentary: *Brihatsaman* is the chief of the hymns of the Sama-Veda. *Brihat* means 'big'.

Margasirsha: From the middle of December to the middle of January. This has a temperate climate. In olden days it was usual to start with this month in counting the months of the year. The first place was given to this month.

Kusumakara: The beautiful flowery season, the spring.

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥३६॥

द्यूतम् the gambling, छलयताम् of the fraudulent, अस्मि (I) am, तेजः splendour, तेजस्विनाम् of the splendid, अहम् I, जयः victory, अस्मि (I) am, व्यवसायः determination, अस्मि (I) am, सत्त्वम् the goodness, सत्त्ववताम् of the good, अहम् I.

36. I am the gambling of the fraudulent; I am the splendour of the splendid; I am victory; I am determination (of those who are determined); I am the goodness of the good.

Commentary: Of the methods of defrauding others I am gambling such as dice-play. Gambling is My manifestation. I am the power of the powerful. I am the victory of the victorious. I am the effort of those who make that effort.

I am *Sattva* which assumes the forms of Dharma (virtue), Jnana (knowledge), Vairagya (dispassion), and Aisvarya (wealth or lordship) in Sattvic persons.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥३७॥

वृष्णीनाम् among the Vrishnis, वासुदेवः Vaasudeva, अस्मि (I) am, पाण्डवानाम् among the Pandavas, धनंजयः Dhananjaya, मुनीनाम् among the sages, अपि also, अहम् I, व्यासः Vyasa. कवीनाम् among poets, उशनाः Usanas, कविः the poet.

37. Among the Vrishnis I am Vaasudeva; among the Pandavas I am Arjuna; among the sages I am Vyasa; among the poets I am Usanas, the poet.

Commentary: *Vrishnis* are Yadavas or the descendants of Yadu. I am the foremost among them.

Usanas is Sukracharya, the preceptor of the demons.

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां- ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ।।३८।।

दण्डः the sceptre, दमयताम् among punishers, अस्मि (I) am, नीतिः statesmanship, अस्मि (I) am, जिगीषताम् among those who seek victory, मौनम् silence, च and, एव also, अस्मि (I) am, गुह्यानाम् among secrets, ज्ञानम् the knowledge, ज्ञानवताम् among the knowers, अहम् I.

38. Of those who punish, I am the sceptre; among those who seek victory, I am statesmanship; and also among secrets, I am silence; knowledge among knowers I am.

Niti: Diplomacy, polity.

Maunam: The silence produced by constant meditation on Brahman or the Self.

Jnanam: Knowledge of the Self.

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ।।३९।।

यत् which, च and, अपि also, सर्वभूतानाम् among all beings, बीजम् seed, तत् that, अहम् I, अर्जुन O Arjuna, न not, तत् that, अस्ति is, विना without, यत् which, स्यात् may be, मया by Me, भूतम् being, चराचरम् moving or unmoving.

39. And whatever is the seed of all beings, that also am I, O Arjuna; there is no being, whether moving or unmoving, that can exist without Me.

Commentary: I am the primeval seed from which all creation has come into existence. I am the seed of everything. I am the Self of everything. Nothing can exist without Me. Everything is of My nature. I am the essence of everything. Without Me all things would be mere void. I am the soul of everything.

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ।।४०।।

न not, अन्तः end, अस्ति is, मम My, दिव्यानाम् of divine, विभूतीनाम् glories, परंतप O scorcher of foes, एषः this, तु indeed, उद्देशतः briefly, प्रोक्तः has been stated, विभूतेः of glory, विस्तरः particulars, मया by Me.

40. There is no end to My divine glories, O Arjuna, but this is a brief statement by Me of the particulars of My divine glories.

Commentary: It is impossible for anyone to describe or know the exact extent of the divine glories of the Lord. There is no limit to His powers or glories. What could be expressed of Him is nothing when compared to His infinite glories.

Parantapa: Scorcher of foes—he who burns the internal enemies, lust, anger, greed, delusion, etc.

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंऽशसंभवम् ॥४१॥

यत् यत् whatever, विभूतिमत् glorious, सत्त्वम् being, श्रीमत् prosperous, ऊर्जितम् powerful, एव also, वा or, तत् तत् that, एव only, अवगच्छ know, त्वम् thou, मम My, तेजोंऽशसंभवम् a manifestation of a part of My splendour.

41. Whatever being there is glorious, prosperous or powerful, that know thou to be a manifestation of a part of My splendour.

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥४२॥

अथवा or, बहुना (by) many, एतेन (by) this, किम् what, ज्ञातेन known, तव to thee, अर्जुन O Arjuna, विष्टभ्य supporting, अहम् I, इदम् this, कृत्स्नम् all, एकांशेन by one part, स्थितः exist, जगत् the world.

42. But, of what avail to thee is the knowledge of all these details, O Arjuna? I exist, supporting this whole world by one part of Myself.

Commentary: The Lord concludes: "Having established or pervaded this whole world with one fragment of Myself, I remain."

This verse is based on the declaration in the Purusha Sukta (Rig-Veda 10. 90. 3) that "One quarter of Him is all the cosmos: the three quarters are the divine transcendent Reality."

I exist supporting this whole world by one part, by one limit, or by one foot. One part of Myself constitutes all beings.

All beings form His foot (*Taittiriya Aranyaka* 3. 12). The whole world is one *Pada* or foot of the Lord. *Amsa* (part) or *Pada* (foot) is mere Kalpana or imagination on account of our own ignorance or limiting adjunct. In reality Brahman is without any such parts or limbs and is formless.

Arjuna has now a knowledge of the glories of the Lord. He is fit to behold the magnificent cosmic form of the Lord. Lord Krishna prepares Arjuna for this grand vision by giving him a description of His glories.

Arjuna says: "O Lord, I now realise that the whole world is filled by Thee. I now wish to behold the whole universe in Thee with my eye of intuition."

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
विभूतियोगो नाम दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the tenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Divine Glories.

अथ एकादशोऽध्यायः

ELEVENTH DISCOURSE

विश्वरूपदर्शन योगः

THE YOGA OF THE VISION OF THE COSMIC FORM

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ।।१।।

मदनुग्रहाय for the sake of blessing me, परमम् the highest, गुह्यम् the secret, अध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् called Adhyatma, यत् which, त्वया by Thee, उक्तम् spoken, वचः word, तेन by that, मोहः delusion, अयम् this, विगतः gone, मम my.

Arjuna said:

1. By this word (explanation) of the highest secret concerning the Self which Thou hast spoken, for the sake of blessing me, my delusion is gone.

Commentary: After hearing the glories of the Lord, Arjuna has an intense longing to have the wonderful vision of the Cosmic Form with his own eyes. His bewilderment and delusion have now vanished.

Adhyatma: That which treats of the discrimination between the Self and the not-Self; metaphysics.

I was worried about the sin involved in killing my relations and preceptors. I had the ideas, 'I am the agent in killing them; they are to be killed by me'.

This delusion has vanished now after receiving Thy most profound and valuable instructions. Thou hast dispelled this delusion of ignorance from me.

The vision of the Cosmic Form is not the ultimate goal. If that were so, the Gita would have ended with this chapter. The vision of the Cosmic Form is also one more in a series of graded experiences. It is a terrible experience too. That is the reason why Arjuna said to the Lord, stammering with fear: "What an awful form Thou hast! I have seen that which none hath seen before. My heart is glad, yet faileth me on account of fear. Show me, O God, Thine other form again. O God of gods, support of all the worlds, let me see Thy form with the diadem, and with the mace and discus in Thy hands. Again I wish to see Thee as before; assume Thy four-armed form, O Lord of thousand arms and of forms innumerable."

Arjuna heard the Lord's statement, viz., "Having pervaded this whole universe with one fragment of Myself, I remain." This induced him to have the vision of the Lord's Cosmic Form. He says, "O Lord of compassion, Thou hast taught me the spiritual wisdom which can hardly be found in the Vedas. Thou hast saved me. My delusion has disappeared. Thou hast disclosed to me the nature of the Supreme Self, the secrets of Nature and Thy divine glories. My greatest ambition at the present moment is that I should behold with my own eyes Thy entire Cosmic Form."

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥२॥

भवाप्ययौ the origin and the dissolution, हि indeed, भूतानाम् of beings, श्रुतौ have been heard, विस्तरशः in detail, मया by me, त्वत्तः from Thee, कमलपत्राक्ष O lotus-eyed, माहात्म्यम् greatness, अपि also, च and, अव्ययम् inexhaustible.

2. The origin and the destruction of beings verily have been heard by me in detail from Thee, O lotus-eyed Lord, and also Thy inexhaustible greatness.

Commentary: *Kamalapatraksha:* Lotus-eyed or having eyes like lotus-petals. Kamalapatra also means knowledge of the Self. He who can be obtained by knowledge of the Self is Kamalapatraksha.

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥३॥

एवम् thus, एतत् this, यथा as, आत्थ hast declared, त्वम् Thou, आत्मानम् Thyself, परमेश्वर O Supreme Lord, द्रष्टुम् to see, इच्छामि (I) desire, ते Thy, रूपम् form, ऐश्वरम् sovereign, पुरुषोत्तम O Supreme Purusha.

3. (Now) O Supreme Lord, as Thou hast thus described Thyself, O Supreme Person, I wish to see Thy divine form.

Commentary: Some commentators take the two halves of this verse as two independent sentences and interpret it thus:

"So it is, O Supreme Lord, as Thou hast declared Thyself to be. (But still) I desire to see Thy form as Isvara, O Supreme Person."

Rupamaisvaram: Thy form as Isvara, that of Vishnu as possessed of infinite knowledge, sovereignty, power, strength, prowess and splendour.

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयाऽत्मानमव्ययम् ॥४॥

मन्यसे Thou thinkest, यदि if, तत् that, शक्यम् possible, मया by me, द्रष्टुम् to see, इति thus, प्रभो O Lord, योगेश्वर O Lord of Yogins, ततः then, मे me, त्वम् Thou, दर्शय show, आत्मानम् (Thy) Self, अव्ययम् imperishable.

4. If Thou, O Lord, thinkest it possible for me to see it, do Thou, then, O Lord of the Yogins, show me Thy imperishable Self.

Commentary: Arjuna is very keen and eager to see the Cosmic Form of the Lord. He prays to Him to grant him the vision. This supreme vision can be obtained only through His grace.

Yogesvara also means the Lord of Yoga. A Yogi is one who is endowed with the eight psychic powers (Siddhis). The Lord of the Yogins is Yogesvara. And, Yoga is identity of the individual soul with the Absolute. He who is able to bestow this realisation of identity on the deserving spiritual aspirant is Yogesvara.

He Who is able to create, preserve, destroy, veil and graciously release is the Lord. (These five actions, Panchakriyas, are known respectively as Srishti, Sthiti, Samhara, Tirodhana and Anugraha.)

श्री भगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥५॥

पश्य behold, मे My, पार्थ O Partha, रूपाणि forms, शतशः by hundreds, अथ and, सहस्रशः by thousands, नानाविधानि of different sorts, दिव्यानि divine, नानावर्णाकृतीनि of various colours and shapes, च and.

The Blessed Lord said:

5. Behold, O Arjuna, forms of Mine, by the hundreds and thousands, of different sorts, divine, and of various colours and shapes.

Commentary: *Divyani:* Divine; supernatural.

Satasah, *Sahasrasah:* By the hundreds and thousands—countless.

O Arjuna, I want you to behold the Cosmic Form. All beings and entities are there. The fat and the lean, the short and the tall, the red and the black, the active and the passive, the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the dull, the healthy and the sick, the noisy and the silent, those that are awake, those that are asleep, the beautiful and the ugly, and all grades of beings with their distinctive marks are all there. The blueness of the sky, the yellowness of the silk, the redness of the twilight, the blackness of the coal, the whiteness of the snow, and the greenness of the leaves will be seen by you. You will also behold the objects of various shapes.

पश्यादित्यान्वसून्रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याऽश्चर्याणि भारत ॥६॥

पश्य behold, आदित्यान् the Adityas, वसून् the Vasus, रुद्रान् the Rudras, अश्विनौ the (two) Asvins, मरुतः the Maruts, तथा also, बहूनि many, अदृष्टपूर्वाणि never seen before, पश्य see, आश्चर्याणि wonders, भारत O Bharata.

6. Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the two Asvins and also the Maruts; behold many wonders never seen before, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Adityas, Vasus, Rudras and Maruts have already been described in the previous chapter.

Not these alone! Behold also many other wonders never seen before by you or anybody else in this world.

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥७॥

इह in this, एकस्थम् centred in one, जगत् the universe, कृत्स्नम् whole, पश्य behold, अद्य now, सचराचरम् with the moving and the unmoving, मम My, देहे in body, गुडाकेश O Gudakesa, यत् whatever, च and, अन्यत् other, द्रष्टुम् to see, इच्छसि (thou) desirest.

7. Now behold, O Arjuna, in this, My body, the whole universe centred in one—including the moving and the unmoving—and whatever else thou desirest to see.

Commentary: *Anyat:* Other; whatever else. Your success or defeat in the war, about which you have entertained a doubt. (*Cf.* II. 6)

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥८॥

न not, तु but, माम् Me, शक्यसे (thou) canst, द्रष्टुम् to see, अनेन with this, एव even, स्वचक्षुषा with own eyes, दिव्यम् divine, ददामि (I) give, ते (to) thee, चक्षुः the eye, पश्य behold, मे My, योगम् Yoga, ऐश्वरम् lordly.

8. But thou art not able to behold Me with these thine own eyes; I give thee the divine eye; behold My lordly Yoga.

Commentary: No fleshly eyes can behold Me in My Cosmic Form. One can see It through the divine eye or the eye of intuition. It should not be confused with seeing through the eye or the mind. It is an inner experience.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "I give thee the divine eye, by which you will be able to behold My sovereign form. By it see My marvellous power of Yoga."

Anena: With this: the fleshly eye or the physical eye, the earthly eye. (*Cf.* VII. 25; IX. 5; X. 7)

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ।।९।।

एवम् thus, उक्त्वा having spoken, ततः then, राजन् O king, महायोगेश्वरः the great Lord of Yoga, हरिः Hari, दर्शयामास showed, पार्थाय to Arjuna, परमम् Supreme, रूपम् form, ऐश्वरम् Sovereign.

Sanjaya said:

9. Having thus spoken, O king, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari (Krishna), showed to Arjuna His supreme form as the Lord.

Commentary: *King:* This verse is addressed by Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra.

Supreme Form: The Cosmic Form.

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ।।१०।।

अनेकवक्त्रनयनम् with numerous mouths and eyes, अनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् with numerous wonderful sights, अनेकदिव्याभरणम् with numerous divine ornaments, दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् with numerous divine weapons uplifted.

10. With numerous mouths and eyes, with numerous wonderful sights, with numerous divine ornaments, with numerous divine weapons uplifted (such a form He showed).

Commentary: Countless faces appeared there. Arjuna looked at this Cosmic Form in all its magnificence. He saw the Lord everywhere and in everything. The whole manifestation appeared as one gigantic body of the Lord. He saw the Lord as the *all-in-all.*

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ।।११।।

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरम् wearing divine garlands (necklaces) and apparel, दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् anointed with divine unguents, सर्वाश्चर्यमयम्

the all-wonderful, देवम् resplendent, अनन्तम् endless, विश्वतोमुखम् with faces on all sides.

11. Wearing divine garlands (necklaces) and apparel, anointed with divine unguents, the all-wonderful, resplendent (Being) endless with faces on all sides,

Commentary: *Visvatomukham:* With faces on all sides, as He is the Self of all beings.

Devam: God. Also means 'resplendent'.

Anantam: Endless. He Who is free from the three kinds of limitations, viz., Desa-Kala-Vastu-Pariccheda (limitations of space, time and thing respectively) is Anantam. He is Brahman. This philosophical concept is explained below.

The pot is *here*. This is space-limitation. The pot is *now* here. This is time-limitation. The pot is *not a cloth*. This is thing-(material) limitation. There is saffron in Kashmir only. This is limitation of space and thing. You can have apples only in September. This is limitation of time and thing. But Brahman is everywhere, as It is all-pervading. It exists in the past, the present and the future. It dwells in all parts. Hence It is beyond these three limitations. It is therefore endless.

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ।।१२।।

दिवि in the sky, सूर्यसहस्रस्य of a thousand suns, भवेत् were, युगपत् at once (simultaneously), उत्थिता arisen, यदि if, भाः splendour, सदृशी like, सा that, स्यात् would be, भासः splendour, तस्य of that, महात्मनः of the mighty Being (great soul).

12. If the splendour of a thousand suns were to blaze out at once (simultaneously) in the sky, that would be the splendour of that mighty Being (great Soul).

Commentary: *Divi* here means in the Antariksha or the sky.

Mahatma here refers to the great Soul or the mighty Being, the Cosmic Form.

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥१३॥

तत्र there, एकस्थम् resting in one, जगत् the universe, कृत्स्नम् the whole, प्रविभक्तम् divided, अनेकधा in many groups, अपश्यत् saw, देवदेवस्य of the God of gods, शरीरे in the body, पाण्डवः son of Pandu, तदा then.

13. There, in the body of the God of gods, Arjuna then saw the whole universe resting in one, with its many groups.

Commentary: *Tatra:* There—in the Cosmic Form.

Anekadha: Many groups—gods, manes, men and other species of beings.

Arjuna beheld all forms as the forms of the Lord, all heads as His heads, all eyes as His eyes, all hands as His hands, all feet as His feet, every part of every body as the limb of the Lord's divine form. Wherever he looked he beheld nothing but the Lord. He got mystic divine knowledge.

Sanjaya has given a truly graphic description of the Cosmic Form. Yet, it would be futile to grasp it with the finite mind. It is a transcendental vision, beyond the reach of the mind and senses. It has to be realised in Samadhi.

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥१४॥

ततः then, सः he, विस्मयाविष्टः filled with wonder, हृष्टरोमा with hair standing on end, धनञ्जयः Arjuna, प्रणम्य having prostrated, शिरसा with (his) head, देवम् the God, कृताञ्जलिः with joined palms, अभाषत spoke.

14. Then, Arjuna, filled with wonder and with his hair standing on end, bowed down his head to the God and spoke with joined palms.

Commentary: *Tatah:* Then, having seen the Cosmic Form.

Arjuna joined his palms in order to do prostration to the Cosmic Form. The great hero had attained true humility which the bowed head and joined palms represented, and which is the essential ingredient of devotion.

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे
सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थ-
मृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥१५॥

पश्यामि (I) see, देवान् the gods, तव Thy, देव O God, देहे in the body, सर्वान् all, तथा also, भूतविशेषसङ्घान् hosts of various classes of beings, ब्रह्माणम् Brahma, ईशम् the Lord, कमलासनस्थम् seated on the lotus, ऋषीन् sages, च and, सर्वान् all, उरगान् serpents, च and, दिव्यान् divine.

Arjuna said:

15. I see all the gods, O God, in Thy body, and (also) hosts of various classes of beings, Brahma, the Lord, seated on the lotus, all the sages and the celestial serpents.

Commentary: Arjuna describes his own experience of the Cosmic Form in this and the following verses, 15 to 31.

Bhutaviseshasanghan: Hosts of various classes of beings, both animate and inanimate. These numerous entities are in Thy Cosmic Form, like hairs on the human body.

Brahma, the four-faced, the Lord of all creatures, is seated in the centre of the earth-lotus on the Meru which forms the thalamus as it were of the earth-lotus.

Sages, such as Vasishtha. *Serpents*, such as Vasuki.

Moreover—

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं
पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं
पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥१६॥

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रम् with manifold arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes, पश्यामि (I) see, त्वाम् Thee, सर्वतः on every side, अनन्तरूपम् of boundless form, न not, अन्तम् end, न not, मध्यम् middle, न not, पुनः again, तव Thy, आदिम् origin, पश्यामि (I) see, विश्वेश्वर O Lord of the universe, विश्वरूप O Cosmic Form.

16. I see Thee of boundless form on every side with many arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes: neither the end nor the middle nor also the beginning do I see, O Lord of the universe, O Cosmic Form.

Commentary: A thing that is limited by space and time has a beginning, a middle and an end, but the Lord is omnipresent and eternal. He exists in the three periods of time—past, present and future, but is not limited by time and space. Therefore He has neither a beginning nor middle nor end.

Arjuna could have this divine vision only with the help of the divine eye bestowed upon him by the Lord. He who has supreme devotion to the Lord and on whom the Lord showers His grace can enjoy this wondrous vision.

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च
तेजोराशिं सर्वतोदीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ता-
द्दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥१७॥

किरीटिनम् one with diadem, गदिनम् with club, चक्रिणम् with discus, च and, तेजोराशिम् a mass of radiance, सर्वतः everywhere, दीप्तिमन्तम् shining, पश्यामि (I) see, त्वाम् Thee, दुर्निरीक्ष्यम् very hard to look at, समन्तात् all round, दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिम् blazing like burning fire and sun, अप्रमेयम् immeasurable.

17. I see Thee with the diadem, the club and the discus, a mass of radiance shining everywhere, very hard to look at, blazing all round like burning fire and the sun, and immeasurable.

Commentary: *Kiritam* is a special ornament for the head, the crown.

Arjuna had worshipped the Lord as having a crown, club and discus and the Lord showed him the same form now. He is in all forms and He is beyond all forms as the transcendental Reality. Who can comprehend His Glory?

Tejorasim: A mass of splendour that cannot be perceived without the inner divine eye of intuition.

Aprameyam: Immeasurable, whose limits cannot be fixed.

I infer from this vision of Thy power of Yoga that Thou art the Imperishable, etc.

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं
त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता
सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥१८॥

त्वम् Thou, अक्षरम् imperishable, परमम् the Supreme Being, वेदितव्यम् worthy to be known, त्वम् Thou, अस्य (of) this, विश्वस्य of universe, परम् the great, निधानम् treasure-house, त्वम् Thou, अव्ययः imperishable, शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता Protector of the Eternal Dharma, सनातनः ancient, त्वम् Thou, पुरुषः Purusha, मतः thought, मे of me.

18. Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme Being, worthy to be known. Thou art the great treasure-house of this universe; Thou art the imperishable protector of the eternal Dharma; Thou art the Primal Person, I deem.

Commentary: *Visvasya-Nidhaanam:* Treasure-house of this universe, also means 'abode' or 'refuge' or the substratum of this universe. It is because of this that all the beings in the universe are preserved and protected. He is the inexhaustible source to Whom the devotee turns at all times. Deluded indeed are they that ignore this divine treasure-house and run after the shadow of the objects of the senses which do not contain even an iota of pleasure.

Veditavyam: To be known by the aspirants or seekers of liberation, through Sravana (hearing of the scriptures), Manana (reflection) and Nididhyasana (meditation).

Avyayah means inexhaustible, unchanging, undying.

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्य-
मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रम्
स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥१९॥

अनादिमध्यान्तम् without beginning, middle or end, अनन्तवीर्यम् infinite in power, अनन्तबाहुम् of endless arms, शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् Thy eyes as the sun and the moon, पश्यामि (I) see, त्वाम् Thee, दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रम् Thy mouth as the burning fire, स्वतेजसा with Thy radiance, विश्वम् the universe, इदम् this, तपन्तम् heating.

19. I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of endless arms, the sun and the moon being Thy eyes, the burning fire Thy mouth, heating the whole universe with Thy radiance.

Commentary: *Anantabahu:* Having endless arms. This denotes that the multiplicity of His limbs are endless.

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि
व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।
दृष्ट्वाऽद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं
लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥२०॥

द्यावापृथिव्योः of heaven and earth, इदम् this, अन्तरम् interspace, हि indeed, व्याप्तम् is filled, त्वया by Thee, एकेन alone, दिशः quarters, च and, सर्वाः all, दृष्ट्वा having seen, अद्भुतम् wonderful, रूपम् form, उग्रम् terrible, तव Thy, इदम् this, लोकत्रयम् the three worlds, प्रव्यथितम् are trembling with fear, महात्मन् O great-souled Being.

20. This space between the earth and the heaven and all the quarters are filled by Thee alone; having seen this, Thy wonderful and terrible form, the three worlds are trembling with fear, O great-souled Being.

Commentary: *Thee:* In Thy Cosmic Form.

The space and the quarters: This denotes that the Lord has filled the whole universe of animate and inanimate objects.

In order to remove the doubt entertained by Arjuna as to his success (*Cf.* II. 6) Lord Krishna makes him feel now that victory for the Pandavas is certain.

अमी हि त्वां सुरसङ्घाः विशन्ति
केचिद्भीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः
स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥२१॥

अमी these, हि verily, त्वाम् Thee, सुरसङ्घाः hosts of gods, विशन्ति enter, केचित् some, भीताः in fear, प्राञ्जलयः with joined palms, गृणन्ति extol, स्वस्ति may it be well, इति thus, उक्त्वा having said, महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः bands of great Rishis and Siddhas, स्तुवन्ति praise, त्वाम् Thee, स्तुतिभिः with hymns, पुष्कलाभिः complete.

21. Verily, into Thee enter these hosts of gods; some extol Thee in fear with joined palms; saying 'may it be well', bands of great sages and perfected ones praise Thee with hymns complete.

Commentary: *Pushkalabhih* means complete or well-worded praises or praises full of deep meanings.

Great sages like Narada and perfected ones like Kapila praise Thee with inspiring hymns.

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या
विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।
गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा
वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥२२॥

रुद्रादित्याः Rudras and Adityas, वसवः Vasus, ये these, च and, साध्याः Sadhyas, विश्वे Visvedevas, अश्विनौ the two Asvins, मरुतः Maruts, च and, ऊष्मपाः Pitris, च and, गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घाः hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas, वीक्षन्ते are looking at, त्वाम् Thee, विस्मिताः astonished, च and, एव even, सर्वे all.

22. The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Visvedevas, the two Asvins, Maruts, the manes and the hosts of celestial singers,

Yakshas, demons and the perfected ones, are all looking at Thee, in great amazement.

Commentary: *Sadhyas* are a class of gods of whom Brahma is the chief.

Visvedevas are ten gods who in Vedic times were considered as protectors of human beings. They were called guardians of the world. They were givers of plenty to the human beings. Their names are: Kratu, Daksha, Vasu, Satya, Kama, Kala, Dhvani, Rochaka, Adrava and Pururava.

The two Asvins, born of Prabha (light), daughter of Tushta and the Sun, are the physicians of the gods.

Rudras, Adityas, Vasus and Maruts—see tenth chapter, verses 21 and 23.

Ushmapa: A class of manes. They accept the food offered in the Sraaddha (anniversary) ceremony or the obsequies, while it is hot. Hence they are called Ushmapas. There are seven groups of manes.

Gandharvas are celestial singers such as Haha and Huhu.

Yakshas such as Kubera (the god of wealth); *Asuras* such as Virochana; *perfected ones* such as Kapila.

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं
महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं
दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाऽहम् ॥२३॥

रूपम् form, महत् immeasurable, ते Thy, बहुवक्त्रनेत्रम् with many mouths and eyes, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, बहुबाहूरुपादम् with many arms, thighs and feet, बहूदरम् with many stomachs, बहुदंष्ट्राकरालम् fearful with many teeth, दृष्ट्वा having seen, लोकाः the worlds, प्रव्यथिताः are terrified, तथा also, अहम् I.

23. Having seen Thy immeasurable form with many mouths and eyes, O mighty-armed, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and fearful with many teeth—the worlds are terrified and so am I.

Commentary: *Lokah:* The worlds—all living beings in the world.

Here is the cause of my fear. Arjuna describes below the nature of the Cosmic Form which has caused terror in his heart.

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं
व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा
धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥२४॥

नभःस्पृशम् touching the sky, दीप्तम् shining, अनेकवर्णम् in many colours, व्यात्ताननम् with mouths wide open, दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् with large fiery eyes, दृष्ट्वा having seen, हि verily, त्वाम् Thee, प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा terrified at heart, धृतिम् courage, न not, विन्दामि (I) find, शमम् peace, च and, विष्णो O Vishnu.

24. On seeing Thee (the Cosmic Form) touching the sky, shining in many colours, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, I am terrified at heart and find neither courage nor peace, O Vishnu.

Commentary: *Dhriti* also means patience and strength.

Sama also means control.

The vision of the Cosmic Form has frightened Arjuna considerably.

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥२५॥

दंष्ट्राकरालानि fearful with teeth, च and, ते Thy, मुखानि mouths, दृष्ट्वा having seen, एव even, कालानलसन्निभानि blazing like Pralaya-fires, दिशः the four quarters, न not, जाने know, न not, लभे do (I) obtain, च and, शर्म peace, प्रसीद have mercy, देवेश O Lord of the gods, जगन्निवास O abode of the universe.

25. Having seen Thy mouths fearful with teeth (blazing) like the fires of cosmic dissolution, I know not the four quarters, nor

do I find peace. Have mercy, O Lord of the gods, O abode of the universe.

Commentary: *Jagannivasa:* The substratum of the universe.

Kalanala: The fires which consume the worlds during the final dissolution of the worlds (Pralaya). Time (Kala) is the consumer of all that is manifest.

Diso na jane: I do not know the four quarters. I cannot distinguish the east from the west, nor the north from the south.

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः
सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथाऽसौ
सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥२६॥

अमी these, च and, त्वाम् Thee, धृतराष्ट्रस्य of Dhritarashtra, पुत्राः sons, सर्वे all, सह with, एव even, अवनिपालसङ्घैः hosts of kings, भीष्मः Bhishma, द्रोणः Drona, सूतपुत्रः Karna, तथा also, असौ this, सह with, अस्मदीयैः with (those) of ours, अपि also, योधमुख्यैः (with) warrior chiefs.

26. All the sons of Dhritarashtra, with the hosts of kings of the earth, Bhishma, Drona and Karna, with the chief among our warriors,

Commentary: Karna, though he was the son of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, was brought up by a charioteer and hence came to be regarded as his son.

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति
दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु
संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥२७॥

वक्त्राणि mouths, ते Thy, त्वरमाणाः hurrying, विशन्ति enter, दंष्ट्राकरालानि terrible-toothed, भयानकानि fearful to behold, केचित् some, विलग्नाः sticking, दशनान्तरेषु in the gaps between the teeth, संदृश्यन्ते are found, चूर्णितैः crushed to powder, उत्तमाङ्गैः with (their) heads.

27. Some hurriedly enter Thy mouths with their terrible teeth, fearful to behold. Some are found sticking in the gaps between the teeth with their heads crushed to powder.

Commentary: How do they enter into the mouth? Arjuna continues:

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः
समुद्रमेवाभिमुखाः द्रवन्ति ।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा
विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥२८॥

यथा as, नदीनाम् of rivers, बहवः many, अम्बुवेगाः water-currents, समुद्रम् to the ocean, एव verily, अभिमुखाः towards, द्रवन्ति flow, तथा so, तव Thy, अमी these, नरलोकवीराः heroes in the world of men, विशन्ति enter, वक्त्राणि mouths, अभिविज्वलन्ति flaming.

28. Verily, just as many torrents of rivers flow towards the ocean, even so these heroes in the world of men enter Thy flaming mouths.

Commentary: *Ami:* These warriors such as Bhishma. Arjuna is now seeing all these warriors whom he did not wish to kill, rushing to death. His delusion has vanished. He thinks now: "This battle cannot be avoided. It has the sanction of the Supreme Lord. Why should I worry about the inevitable? The Lord has already destroyed these warriors. I am only an instrument in His hands. No sin can touch me even if I kill them. This is a just cause also."

Why and how do they enter? Arjuna says—

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा
विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोका-
स्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥२९॥

यथा as, प्रदीप्तम् blazing, ज्वलनम् fire, पतङ्गाः moths, विशन्ति enter, नाशाय to destruction, समृद्धवेगाः with quickened speed, तथा so, एव

only, नाशाय to destruction, विशन्ति enter, लोकाः creatures, तव Thy, अपि also, वक्त्राणि mouths, समृद्धवेगाः with quickened speed.

29. As moths hurriedly rush into a blazing fire for (their own) destruction, so also these creatures hurriedly rush into Thy mouths for (their own) destruction.

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ता-
ल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं
भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥३०॥

लेलिह्यसे (Thou) lickest, ग्रसमानः devouring, समन्तात् on every side, लोकान् the worlds, समग्रान् all, वदनैः with mouths, ज्वलद्भिः flaming, तेजोभिः with radiance, आपूर्य filling, जगत् the world, समग्रम् the whole, भासः rays, तव Thy, उग्राः fierce, प्रतपन्ति are burning, विष्णो O Vishnu!

30. Thou lickest up, devouring all the worlds on every side with Thy flaming mouths. Thy fierce rays, filling the whole world with radiance, are burning, O Vishnu!

Commentary: *Vishnu* means all-pervading, Vyapanasila.

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो
नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥३१॥

आख्याहि tell, मे me, कः who (art), भवान् Thou, उग्ररूपः fierce in form, नमः salutation, अस्तु be, ते to Thee, देववर O God Supreme, प्रसीद have mercy, विज्ञातुम् to know, इच्छामि (I) wish, भवन्तम् Thee, आद्यम् the original Being, न not, हि indeed, प्रजानामि (I) know, तव Thy, प्रवृत्तिम् doing.

31. Tell me, who Thou art, so fierce of form. Salutations to Thee, O God Supreme: have mercy. I desire to know Thee, the original Being. I know not indeed Thy working.

श्री भगवानुवाच

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे
येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥३२॥

कालः time, अस्मि (I) am, लोकक्षयकृत् world-destroying, प्रवृद्धः full-grown, लोकान् the worlds, समाहर्तुम् to destroy, इह here, प्रवृत्तः engaged, ऋते without, अपि also, त्वाम् thee, न not, भविष्यन्ति shall live, सर्वे all, ये these, अवस्थिताः arrayed, प्रत्यनीकेषु in hostile armies, योधाः warriors.

The Blessed Lord said:

32. I am the full-grown world-destroying Time, now engaged in destroying the worlds. Even without thee, none of the warriors arrayed in the hostile armies shall live.

Commentary: *Even without thee:* Even if thou, O Arjuna, wouldst not fight, these warriors are doomed to die under My dispensation. I am the all-destroying Time. I have already slain them. You have seen them dying. Therefore thy instrumentality is not of much importance.

Such being the case, therefore, stand up and obtain fame.

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व
जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥३३॥

तस्मात् therefore, त्वम् thou, उत्तिष्ठ stand up, यशः fame, लभस्व obtain, जित्वा having conquered, शत्रून् enemies, भुङ्क्ष्व enjoy, राज्यम् the kingdom, समृद्धम् the unrivalled, मया by Me, एव even, एते these, निहताः have been slain, पूर्वम् before, एव even, निमित्तमात्रम् a mere instrument, भव be, सव्यसाचिन् O ambidexterous one.

33. Therefore, stand up and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. Verily by Me have they been already slain; be thou a mere instrument, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Be thou merely an apparent or nominal cause. I have already killed them in advance. I have destroyed them long ago.

Fame: People will think that Bhishma, Drona and the other great warriors whom even the gods cannot kill have been defeated by you and so you will obtain great fame. Such fame is due to virtuous Karma only.

Satrun: Enemies such as Duryodhana.

Savyasachi: Arjuna who could shoot arrows even with the left hand.

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च
कर्णं तथाऽन्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ।।३४।।

द्रोणम् Drona, च and, भीष्मम् Bhishma, च and, जयद्रथम् Jayadratha, च and, कर्णम् Karna, तथा also, अन्यान् others, अपि also, योधवीरान् brave warriors, मया by Me, हतान् slain, त्वम् thou, जहि do kill, मा not, व्यथिष्ठाः be distressed with fear, युध्यस्व fight, जेतासि shall conquer, रणे in the battle, सपत्नान् the enemies.

34. Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors—these are already slain by Me: do thou kill; be not distressed with fear; fight and thou shalt conquer thy enemies in battle.

Commentary: *Already slain by Me:* Therefore, O Arjuna, you need not be afraid of incurring sin by killing them.

Drona had celestial weapons. He was Arjuna's teacher in the science of archery. He was Arjuna's beloved and greatest Guru. Bhishma also possessed celestial weapons. He could die only if and when he wanted to die. He once fought single-handed with Lord Parasurama and was not defeated. So powerful was he.

The father of Jayadratha performed penance with a resolve: "the head of the man who may cause the head of my son to fall on the ground, shall also fall." During the war, however, Arjuna's arrow cuts the head and drops it on the lap of the father who, inadvertently, makes it fall on the ground: he too dies at once. Karna, the son of the Sun-god, had obtained an unerring missile from Indra.

सञ्जय उवाच

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य
    कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं
    सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ।।३५।।

एतत् that, श्रुत्वा having heard, वचनम् speech, केशवस्य of Kesava, कृताञ्जलिः with joined palms, वेपमानः trembling, किरीटी Arjuna, नमस्कृत्वा prostrating (himself), भूयः again, एव even, आह addressed, कृष्णम् to Krishna, सगद्गदम् in a choked voice, भीतभीतः overwhelmed with fear, प्रणम्य having prostrated.

Sanjaya said:

35. Having heard that speech of Lord Krishna, Arjuna, with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

Commentary: When anyone is in a state of extreme terror or joy he sheds tears on account of pain or exhilaration of spirits. Then his throat is choked and he stammers or speaks indistinctly or in a dull, choked voice. Arjuna was extremely frightened when he saw the Cosmic Form and so he spoke in a stammering tone.

There is great significance in Sanjaya's words. He thought that Dhritarashtra might come to terms or make peace with the Pandavas when he knew that his sons would certainly be killed for want of proper support when Drona and Karna would be killed by Arjuna. He hoped that consequently there would be peace and happiness to both the parties. But Dhritarashtra was obstinate; he did not listen to this suggestion on account of the force of destiny.

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या
जगत् प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति
सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ॥३६॥

स्थाने it is meet, हृषीकेश O Krishna, तव Thy, प्रकीर्त्या by praise, जगत् the world, प्रहृष्यति is delighted, अनुरज्यते rejoices, च and, रक्षांसि the demons, भीतानि in fear, दिशः to all quarters, द्रवन्ति fly, सर्वे all, नमस्यन्ति bow (to Thee), च and, सिद्धसङ्घाः the hosts of the perfected ones.

Arjuna said:

36. It is meet, O Krishna, that the world delights and rejoices in Thy praise; demons fly in fear to all quarters and the hosts of the perfected ones bow to Thee.

Commentary: *Praise:* description of the glory of the Lord. The Lord is the object worthy of adoration, love and delight, because He is the Self and friend of all beings.

The Lord is the object of adoration, love and delight for the following reason also. He is the primal cause even of Brahma, the Creator of the universe.

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन्
गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास
त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥३७॥

कस्मात् why, च and, ते they, न not, नमेरन् may prostrate, महात्मन् O great-souled One, गरीयसे greater, ब्रह्मणः of Brahma, अपि also, आदिकर्त्रे the primal cause, अनन्त O Infinite Being, देवेश O Lord of the gods, जगन्निवास O Abode of the universe, त्वम् Thou, अक्षरम् Imperishable, सत् the Being, असत् non-being, तत् That, परम् the Supreme, यत् which.

37. And why should they not, O great Soul, bow to Thee Who art greater (than all else), the primal cause even of the

Creator (Brahma), O Infinite Being, O Lord of the gods, O Abode of the universe; Thou art the imperishable, the Being, the non-being and That which is the supreme (that which is beyond the Being and the non-being).

Commentary: The Lord is Mahatma. He is greater than all else. He is the imperishable. So He is the proper object of worship, love and delight.

That which exists in the three periods of time is Sat. Brahman is Sat. That which does not exist in the three periods of time is Asat. This world is Asat. This body is Asat.

The words *Sat* and *Asat* mean here the manifested and the unmanifested which form the adjuncts of the Akshara (imperishable). In reality the Akshara transcends both these. The word *Akshara* is applied in the Gita sometimes to the Unmanifest (Nature) and sometimes to the Supreme Being.

Ananta is He Who is free from the three kinds of limitations (of time, space and thing) which have already been explained (see page 266).

Arjuna again praises the Lord thus:

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-
स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥३८॥

त्वम् Thou, आदिदेवः the primal God, पुरुषः Purusha, पुराणः the ancient, त्वम् Thou, अस्य of (this), विश्वस्य of Universe, परम् the Supreme, निधानम् Refuge, वेत्ता Knower, असि (Thou) art, वेद्यम् to be known, च and, परम् the Supreme, च and, धाम abode, त्वया by Thee, ततम् is pervaded, विश्वम् the Universe, अनन्तरूप O Being of infinte forms.

38. Thou art the primal God, the ancient Purusha, the supreme refuge of this universe, the knower, the knowable and the supreme Abode. By Thee is the universe pervaded, O Being of infinite forms.

Commentary: *Primal God,* because the Lord is the creator of the universe.

Purusha, because the Lord lies in the body (Puri Sayanat).

Nidhaanam: That in which the world rests during the great deluge or cosmic dissolution.

The pot comes out of the clay and gets merged in clay. Even so the world has come out of the Lord and gets dissolved or involved in the Lord. So the Lord is the material cause of the world. Therefore, He is the primal God and the supreme refuge also.

Vetta: Knower of the knowable things. As the Lord is omniscient, He knows all about the world, and He is the instrumental or the efficient cause of this world.

Param Dhama: Supreme Abode of Vishnu. Just as the rope (the substratum for the superimposed snake) pervades the 'snake', so also Brahman or Vishnu through His Nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute pervades the whole universe.

Moreover—

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः
प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः
पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥३९॥

वायुः Vayu, यमः Yama, अग्निः Agni, वरुणः Varuna, शशाङ्कः moon, प्रजापतिः Prajapati, त्वम् Thou, प्रपितामहः great-grandfather, च and, नमःनमः salutations, ते to Thee, अस्तु be, सहस्रकृत्वः thousand times, पुनः again, च and, भूयः again, अपि also, नमःनमः salutations, ते to Thee.

39. Thou art Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the moon, the Creator, and the great-grandfather. Salutations, salutations unto Thee, a thousand times, and again salutations, salutations unto Thee.

Commentary: *Prajapati:* Marichi and others were the seven mind-born sons of Brahma. Kasyapa descended from

Marichi and from Kasyapa came all other progeny. Therefore, Marichi, Kasyapa and others are known as Prajapatis or the gods of progeny. The word *Prajapati* here is interpreted by some as Kasyapa and other Prajapatis. But as the word has been used here in the singular number it is appropriate to take Brahma as Prajapati. Brahma is the grandfather (Pitamaha) of Kasyapa. Brahma or the Hiranyagarbha is the Karya Brahman (effect). Isvara is the Karana Brahman (the cause for Brahma). Therefore, Isvara is the great-grandfather. He is the father of even Brahma.

Isvara has Maya as the limiting adjunct. Maya is His causal body. Isvara has no plane. Maya is in an undifferentiated state. She is in a state where the qualities of Nature (Gunas) are in equilibrium. When the equilibrium is disturbed through the will of Isvara, the three Gunas, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva manifest.

Thou art the moon alludes to and includes the sun also.

Punah, Bhuyah: Again. Salutations a thousand times and again salutations. This indicates that Arjuna had intense faith in and boundless devotion for Lord Krishna. He was not satisfied even if he prostrated himself a thousand times.

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते
नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं
सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥४०॥

नमः salutation, पुरस्तात् (from) front, अथ also, पृष्ठतः (from) behind, ते to Thee, नमः salutation, अस्तु be, ते to Thee, सर्वतः on every side, एव even, सर्व O all, अनन्तवीर्य infinite power, अमितविक्रमः infinite in prowess, त्वम् Thou, सर्वम् all, समाप्नोषि pervadest, ततः wherefore, असि (Thou) art, सर्वः all.

40. Salutations to Thee, in front and behind! Salutations to Thee on every side! O All! Thou infinite in power and prowess, pervadest all; wherefore Thou art all.

Commentary: The words “I prostrate myself before Thee, behind Thee and on every side” indicate the all-pervading nature of the Lord. How can the all-pervading Self have front and back? Finite objects only have front and back sides! Arjuna imagined that there were front and back sides to the Lord and so prostrated himself in his extreme faith and devotion.

O All: Nothing exists without Thee. As the Self is all-pervading, He is called the All. There is nothing except the Self.

On every side, as Thou art present everywhere or in all quarters.

One may be powerful but may not possess the courage to kill the enemies or he may be endowed with a mild form of courage; but the Lord is infinite in courage and infinite in power.

Pervadest by Thy One Self.

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं
हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं
मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ।।४१।।

सखा friend, इति as, मत्वा regarding, प्रसभम् presumptuously, यत् whatever, उक्तम् said, हे कृष्ण O Krishna, हे यादव O Yadava, हे सखा O friend, इति thus, अजानता unknowing, महिमानम् greatness, तव Thy, इदम् this, मया by me, प्रमादात् from carelessness, प्रणयेन due to love, वा or, अपि even.

41. Whatever I have presumptuously said from carelessness or love, addressing Thee as O Krishna! O Yadava! O Friend! regarding Thee merely as a friend, unknowing of this, Thy greatness.

यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि
विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं
तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ।।४२।।

यत् whatever, च and, अवहासार्थम् for the sake of fun, असत्कृतः disrespected, असि (Thou) art, विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु while at play, on bed, while sitting or at meals, एकः (when) one. अथवा or, अपि even,

अच्युत O Krishna, तत् so, समक्षम् in company, तत् that, क्षामये implore to forgive, त्वाम् Thee, अहम् I, अप्रमेयम् immeasurable.

42. In whatever way I may have insulted Thee for the sake of fun, while at play, reposing, sitting or at meals, when alone (with Thee), O Krishna, or in company—that I implore Thee, immeasurable one, to forgive.

Commentary: Arjuna, beholding the Cosmic Form of Lord Krishna, seeks forgiveness for his past familiar conduct. He says, "I have been stupid. I have treated Thee with familiarity, not knowing Thy greatness. I have taken Thee as my friend on account of misconception. I have behaved badly with Thee. Thou art the origin of this universe and yet I have joked with Thee. I have taken undue liberties with Thee. Kindly forgive me, O Lord."

Tat: All those offences.

Achyuta: He who is unchanging.

In company: In the presence of others.

Aprameyam: Immeasurable. He Who has unthinkable glory and splendour.

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥४३॥

पिता Father, असि (Thou) art, लोकस्य of the world, चराचरस्य of the moving and unmoving, त्वम् Thou, अस्य of this, पूज्यः to be revered, च and, गुरुः the Guru, गरीयान् weightier, न not, त्वत्समः equal to Thee, अस्ति is, अभ्यधिकः surpassing, कुतः whence, अन्यः other, लोकत्रये in the three worlds, अपि also, अप्रतिमप्रभाव O Being of unequalled power.

43. Thou art the Father of this world, moving and unmoving. Thou art to be adored by this world, Thou, the greatest Guru; (for) none there exists who is equal to Thee; how then could there be another superior to Thee in the three worlds, O Being of unequalled power?

Commentary: *There exists none who is equal to Thee:* There cannot be two or more Isvaras. If there were, the world will not get on as it does now. All the Isvaras may not be of one mind, as they would all be independent of one another. What one wishes to create, another may wish to destroy!

When there does not exist one who is equal to Thee, how could there be one superior to Thee?

Father: Creator. As the Lord is the creator of this world He is fit to be adored. He is the greatest Guru also. Therefore there is no one who is equal to the Lord.

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ।।४४।।

तस्मात् therefore, प्रणम्य saluting, प्रणिधाय having bent, कायम् body, प्रसादये crave forgiveness, त्वाम् Thee, अहम् I, ईशम् the Lord, ईड्यम् adorable, पिता father, इव like, पुत्रस्य of the son, सखा friend, इव like, सख्युः of the friend, प्रियः beloved, प्रियायाः to the beloved, अर्हसि (Thou) shouldst, देव O God, सोढुम् to bear.

44. Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body, I crave Thy forgiveness, O adorable Lord. As a father forgives his son, a friend his (dear) friend, a lover his beloved, even so shouldst Thou forgive me, O God.

Commentary: O Lord, take me to Thy bosom as a mother does her child. Forgive me for all that I have hitherto spoken or done. Forgive my faults. Please overlook my past mistakes. I have done this through ignorance. Now I have come to Thee in submission. I beg Your pardon now.

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा
भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ।।४५।।

अदृष्टपूर्वम् what was never seen before, हृषितः delighted, अस्मि (I) am, दृष्ट्वा having seen, भयेन with fear, च and, प्रव्यथितम् is distressed, मनः mind, मे my, तत् that, एव only, मे to me, दर्शय show, देव O God, रूपम् form, प्रसीद have mercy, देवेश O Lord of the gods, जगन्निवास O Abode of the universe.

45. I am delighted, having seen what has never been seen before; and yet my mind is distressed with fear. Show me that (previous) form only, O God; have mercy, O God of gods, O Abode of the universe.

Commentary: For an ordinary man the Cosmic Form (Vision) is overwhelming and terrifying, but for a Yogi it is encouraging, strengthening and soul-elevating.

Arjuna says: "The Cosmic Form was never before seen by me. Show me only that form which Thou wearest as my friend."

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-
मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन
सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥४६॥

किरीटिनम् wearing crown, गदिनम् bearing a mace, चक्रहस्तम् with a discus in the hand, इच्छामि (I) desire, त्वाम् Thee, द्रष्टुम् to see, अहम् I, तथैव as before, तेनैव that same, रूपेण of form, चतुर्भुजेन (by) four-armed, सहस्रबाहो O thousand-armed, भव be, विश्वमूर्ते O Universal Form.

46. I desire to see Thee as before, crowned, bearing a mace, with the discus in hand, in Thy former form only, having four arms, O thousand-armed, Cosmic Form (Being).

Commentary: Arjuna says: "O Lord in the Cosmic Form! I do not know where to turn and to whom to address myself. I am frightened. I am longing to see Thee with conch, discus, mace and lotus. Withdraw Thy Cosmic Form. Assume that same four-armed form as before."

Spiritual aspirants are often impatient to have the highest spiritual experiences immediately they begin their Sadhana. This is wrong. They will not be able to withstand the great power that will surge into them. Be patient!

O thousand-armed refers to the Cosmic Form.

श्री भगवानुवाच

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं
रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं
यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥४७॥

मया by Me, प्रसन्नेन gracious, तव to thee, अर्जुन O Arjuna, इदम् this, रूपम् form, परम् supreme, दर्शितम् has been shown, आत्मयोगात् by My own Yogic power, तेजोमयम् full of splendour, विश्वम् universal, अनन्तम् endless, आद्यम् primeval, यत् which, मे of Me, त्वत् from thee, अन्येन by another, न not, दृष्टपूर्वम् seen before.

The Blessed Lord said:

47. O Arjuna, this Cosmic Form has graciously been shown to thee by Me by My own Yogic power; full of splendour, primeval, and infinite, this Cosmic Form of Mine has never been seen before by anyone other than thyself.

Commentary: Lord Krishna eulogises the Cosmic Form because Arjuna should be regarded to have achieved all his ends by seeing this Cosmic Form.

It is also an inducement to all spiritual aspirants to strive to attain this sublime vision. What they should do is explained by the Lord in verses 53 to 55.

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानै-
र्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके
द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥४८॥

न not, वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैः by the study of the Vedas and of Yajnas, न not, दानैः by gifts, न not, च and, क्रियाभिः by rituals, न not, तपोभिः by austerities, उग्रैः severe, एवंरूपः in such form, शक्यः (am) possible,

अहम् I, नृलोके in the world of men, द्रष्टुम् to be seen, त्वत् than thee, अन्येन by another, कुरुप्रवीर O great hero of the Kurus.

48. Neither by the study of the Vedas and sacrifices, nor by gifts nor by rituals nor by severe austerities can I be seen in this form in the world of men by any other than thyself, O great hero of the Kurus (Arjuna).

Commentary: Mere cramming of the texts of the Vedas without knowing the meaning will not do. A study of the sacrifices also is necessary. One should know the meaning of these, also.

Dana: Charity such as a *Tula Purusha* (gift of gold equal in weight of a man); *Kanyadana* (gift of one's daughter in marriage), gift of a cow, rice, etc.

Kriya: Rituals such as Agnihotra.

Tapas: Such as the Chandrayana Vrata. (This is a kind of Vrata or observance. The daily consumption of food is reduced by one mouthful every day for the dark half of the month beginning with the full-moon. Then the food is increased by one mouthful every day during the bright fortnight during the 'increase' of the moon. This Vrata (observance) is a great purifier of the mind. It destroys sins.)

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो
दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं
तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ।।४९।।

मा not, ते thee, व्यथा fear, मा not, च and, विमूढभावः bewildered state, दृष्ट्वा having seen, रूपम् form, घोरम् terrible, ईदृक् such, मम My, इदम् this, व्यपेतभीः with (thy) fear dispelled, प्रीतमनाः with gladdened heart, पुनः again, त्वम् thou, तत् that, एव even, मे My, रूपम् form, इदम् this, प्रपश्य behold.

49. Be not afraid, nor bewildered on seeing such a terrible form of Mine as this; with thy fear dispelled and with a gladdened heart, now behold again this former form of Mine.

Commentary: *Former form* is the form with four hands with conch, discus, club or mace and lotus.

The Lord saw Arjuna in a state of terror. Therefore, He withdrew the Cosmic Form and assumed His usual gentle form. He consoled Arjuna and spoke sweet, loving words.

सञ्जय उवाच

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा
स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं
भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥५०॥

इति thus, अर्जुनम् to Arjuna, वासुदेवः Vaasudeva, तथा so, उक्त्वा having spoken, स्वकम् His own, रूपम् form, दर्शयामास showed, भूयः again, आश्वासयामास consoled, च and, भीतम् who was terrified, एनम् him, भूत्वा having become, पुनः again, सौम्यवपुः of gentle form, महात्मा the great-souled One.

Sanjaya said:

50. Having thus spoken to Arjuna, Krishna again showed His own form and the great Soul (Krishna), assuming His gentle form, consoled him (Arjuna) who was terrified.

Commentary: *His own form:* His form as the son of Vasudeva.

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तवसौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥५१॥

दृष्ट्वा having seen, इदम् this, मानुषम् human, रूपम् form, तव Thy, सौम्यम् gentle, जनार्दन O Krishna, इदानीम् now, अस्मि (I) am, संवृत्तः composed, सचेताः with mind, प्रकृतिम् to nature, गतः restored.

Arjuna said:

51. Having seen this Thy gentle human form, O Krishna, now I am composed and am restored to my own nature.

Commentary: Arjuna says to Lord Krishna: "O Lord, I now behold Thy human form. Now my thoughts are collected and I am serene. I can speak. My senses perform their proper functions. My fear has vanished. Thou hast treated me as a mother would treat her erring child whom she embraces and nurses. Just as the calf rejoices when it beholds its mother who was missing for some days, so also I rejoice now when I behold Thy gentle form. I have drunk the nectar. Now I am alive."

श्री भगवानुवाच

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ।।५२।।

सुदुर्दर्शम् very hard to see, इदम् this, रूपम् form, दृष्टवानसि thou hast seen, यत् which, मम My, देवाः gods, अपि also, अस्य (of) this, रूपस्य of form, नित्यम् ever, दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः (are) desirous to behold.

The Blessed Lord said:

52. Very hard indeed it is to see this form of Mine which thou hast seen. Even the gods are ever longing to behold it.

Commentary: Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "Though the gods long to behold the Cosmic Form yet they have not seen it as you have done. They can never behold it."

Just as the Chataka (a bird) longs for a drop of rain, eagerly turning its eyes towards the clouds, so also do gods yearn to behold the Cosmic Form but their wishes have not been gratified even in their dreams. Such is that marvellous vision which thou hast easily seen.

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ।।५३।।

न not, अहम् I, वेदैः by the Vedas, न not, तपसा by austerity, न not, दानेन by gift, न not, च and, इज्यया by sacrifice, शक्यः (am) possible, एवंविधः like this, द्रष्टुम् to be seen, दृष्टवानसि (thou) hast seen, माम् Me, यथा as.

53. Neither by the Vedas nor by austerity, nor by gift, nor by sacrifice can I be seen in this form as thou hast seen Me (so easily).

Commentary: This Cosmic Form which thou hast seen so easily cannot be obtained either by the study of the Vedas and the six modes of philosophy, nor by the practice of manifold austerities (penances), nor by charity, nor by sacrifices of various kinds.

Arjuna was indeed very fortunate in seeing the Cosmic Form.

How can the Lord be seen? Listen! The heart must be overflowing with true devotion to Him. (*Cf.* XI. 48)

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥५४॥

भक्त्या by devotion, तु indeed, अनन्यया single-minded, शक्यः (am) possible, अहम् I, एवंविधः of this form, अर्जुन O Arjuna, ज्ञातुम् to know, दृष्टुम् to see, च and, तत्त्वेन in reality, प्रवेष्टुम् to enter into, च and, परंतप O Parantapa (O scorcher of the foes).

54. But by single-minded devotion can I, of this Form, be known and seen in reality and also entered into, O Arjuna.

Commentary: Devotion is the sole means to the realisation of the Cosmic Form.

Ananya-Bhakti: Single-minded devotion. One-pointed unbroken devotion; the devotion which does not seek any other object but the Lord alone. In this type of devotion no object other than the Lord is experienced by any of the senses. Egoism and dualism totally vanish.

Of this form refers to the Cosmic Form.

By single-minded devotion it is possible not only to know Me as declared in the scriptures but also to realise Me, i.e., to attain liberation. The devotee realises that the Lord is all this and He alone is the ultimate Reality. When he gets this experience of illumination he gets merged in Him. (*Cf.* VIII. 22; X. 10)

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥५५॥

मत्कर्मकृत् does actions for Me, मत्परमः looks on Me as the Supreme, मद्भक्तः is devoted to Me, सङ्गवर्जितः is freed from attachment, निर्वैरः without enmity, सर्वभूतेषु towards all creatures, यः who, सः he, माम् to Me, एति goes, पाण्डव O Arjuna.

55. He who does all actions for Me, who looks upon Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who bears enmity towards no creature, he comes to Me, O Arjuna.

Commentary: This is the essence of the whole teaching of the Gita. He who practises this teaching will attain Supreme Bliss and Immortality. This verse contains the summary of the entire philosophy of the Gita.

He who performs actions (duties) for the sake of the Lord, who consecrates all his actions to Him, who serves the Lord with his heart and soul, who regards the Lord as his supreme goal, who lives for Him alone, who works for Him alone, who sees the Lord in everything, who sees the whole world as the Cosmic Form of the Lord and therefore cherishes no feeling of hatred or enmity towards any creature even when great injury has been done by others to him, who has no attachment or love to wealth, children, wife, friends and relatives, and who seeks nothing else but the Lord, realises Him and enters into His Being. He becomes one with Him.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नाम एकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the eleventh discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Vision of the Cosmic Form.

अथ द्वादशोऽध्यायः

TWELFTH DISCOURSE

भक्तियोगः

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

अर्जुन उवाच

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥१॥

एवम् thus, सततयुक्ताः ever steadfast, ये who, भक्ताः devotees, त्वाम् Thee, पर्युपासते worship, ये who, च and, अपि also, अक्षरम् the imperishable, अव्यक्तम् the unmanifested, तेषाम् of them, के who, योगवित्तमाः better versed in Yoga.

Arjuna said:

1. Those devotees who, ever steadfast, thus worship Thee and those also who worship the imperishable and the unmanifested—which of them are better versed in Yoga?

Commentary: The twelfth discourse goes to prove that Bhakti Yoga or the Yoga of devotion is much easier than Jnana Yoga or the Yoga of knowledge. In Bhakti Yoga the devotee establishes a near and dear relationship with the Lord. He cultivates slowly any one of the five Bhavas (attitudes) according to his temperament, taste and capacity. The five attitudes are the Santa Bhava (the attitude of peaceful adoration); Dasya Bhava (the attitude of servant towards the master); Sakhya Bhava (the attitude of a friend); Vatsalya Bhava (the attitude of a parent to the child); and Madhurya Bhava (the attitude of the lover towards the beloved). The devotee adopts these attitudes towards the Lord. The last (Madhurya Bhava) is the culmination of devotion. It is merging or absorption in the Lord.

The devotee adores the Lord. He constantly remembers Him (Smarana). He sings His Name (Kirtana). He speaks of His glories. He repeats His Name. He chants His Mantra (Japa). He prays and prostrates himself. He hears His Lilas (divine plays). He does total, ungrudging and unconditional self-surrender, obtains His grace, holds communion with, and eventually gets absorbed in Him.

The devotee begins by worshipping the idols or the symbols of God. Then he performs internal worship of the Form. Ultimately he is led to the supreme worship of the all-pervading Brahman (Para Puja).

Thus: As declared in the last verse of the previous chapter.

Avyaktam: The unmanifested, i.e., incomprehensible to the senses, transcending all limiting adjuncts. The unmanifested Brahman is beyond all limitations. That which is visible to the senses is called Vyakta or manifest.

The hearts of the devotees are wholly fixed on Thee. They worship Thee with all their heart and soul.

There are others who worship the unmanifested Brahman which is beyond time, space and causation, which is attributeless, which is eternal and indefinable, which is beyond the reach of speech and mind. These are the wise sages.

Of these two, the devotees and the men of knowledge —who are the better knowers of Yoga? (*Cf.* XI. 55)

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥२॥

मयि on Me, आवेश्य fixing, मनः the mind, ये who, माम् Me, नित्ययुक्ताः ever steadfast, उपासते worship, श्रद्धया with faith, परया supreme, उपेताः endowed, ते those, मे of Me, युक्ततमाः the best versed in Yoga, मताः (in My) opinion.

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Those who, fixing their mind on Me, worship Me, ever steadfast and endowed with supreme faith, are the best in Yoga in My opinion.

Commentary: Those devotees who fix their minds on Me in the Cosmic Form, the Supreme Lord and worship Me, ever harmonised and with intense and supreme faith, regarding Me as the Lord of all the masters of Yoga, who are free from attachment and other evil passions—these, in My opinion, are the best versed in Yoga.

They spend their days and nights in worshipping Me. They have no other thoughts except those of Myself. They live for Me only. Therefore it is indeed proper to say that they are the best Yogins.

Are not the others, those who contemplate the imperishable, formless, attributeless, qualityless Supreme Brahman, the best of Yogins? Listen now to what I have to say regarding them.

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥३॥

ये who, तु verily, अक्षरम् the imperishable, अनिर्देश्यम् the indefinable, अव्यक्तम् the unmanifested, पर्युपासते worship, सर्वत्रगम् the omnipresent, अचिन्त्यम् the unthinkable, च and, कूटस्थम् the unchangeable, अचलम् the immovable, ध्रुवम् the eternal.

3. Those who worship the imperishable, the indefinable, the unmanifest, the omnipresent, the unthinkable, the immovable and the eternal,

Commentary: *Anirdesyam:* That which cannot be actually shown or which cannot be defined—the Akshara or Satchidananda Para Brahman is beyond the reach of the mind and speech. Why can It not be defined? Because It is unmanifested. It does not have the four qualities of manifested beings, viz., Jati (caste such as Brahmana, Kshatriya, etc.), Guna (attributes such as blueness, whiteness, tallness, shortness, etc.), Kriya (reading, walking, etc.), and Sambandha (like the relation between father and son).

The unmanifest: Incomprehensible by any of the organs of knowledge; not manifest to any of the organs of knowledge.

Upasana (worship) means 'sitting near'. It is approaching the chosen ideal or object of worship by meditating on it, in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures and the spiritual preceptor, and dwelling steadily in the current of that one thought like a 'thread' of oil poured from one vessel to another. It means continuous and uninterrupted contemplation of God.

The imperishable Brahman is omnipresent, pervading everything like the ether. It is unthinkable, because It is unmanifest. Whatever is visible to the senses can be thought of by the mind also. That which can be grasped by the organs of knowledge can be thought of by the mind also. But the Supreme Being is invisible to the senses and so cannot be grasped by the organs of knowledge and is, therefore, unthinkable. All thoughts of God ultimately lead the aspirant to quiescent meditation.

It is *Kutastha* (unchangeable). Kutastha means 'remaining like a mass or a heap'. Therefore It is immutable and eternal. Just as the anvil remains unchanged though the iron-pieces which are beaten on the anvil change their shape, so also Brahman is unchanging though the forms are changing. Hence Brahman is called Kutastha. Kuta also means a thing which appears to be good externally but which is full of evil within. Hence it refers to that seed of Samsara, viz., ignorance, which is full of evil within and which is known as the Avyakrita (undifferentiated) in the Svetasvataropanishad *(Mayam tu prakritim vidyat, Mayinam tu mahesvaram)* and in the Gita (*Mama maya duratyaya*—The illusion of Mine is hard to pierce—VII. 14). Another interpretation for Kutastha is 'that which is at the root of everything'. He Who is seated in Maya as its witness, as its Lord, is Kutastha.

Achalam: Immovable, that which is free from change. Therefore the imperishable Brahman is *Dhruvam,* eternal. (*Cf.* VIII. 21)

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥४॥

संनियम्य having restrained, इन्द्रियग्रामम् the aggregate of the senses, सर्वत्र everywhere, समबुद्धयः even-minded, ते they, प्राप्नुवन्ति obtain, माम् Me, एव only, सर्वभूतहिते in the welfare of all beings, रताः rejoicers.

4. Having restrained all the senses, even-minded everywhere, intent on the welfare of all beings—verily they also come unto Me.

Commentary: Those who are free from likes and dislikes (attraction and repulsion) can possess equanimity of mind. Those who have destroyed ignorance which is the cause for exhilaration and grief, through the knowledge of the Self, those who are free from all kinds of sensual cravings through the constant practice of finding the defects or the evil in sensual pleasures can have evenness of mind. Those who are neither elated nor troubled when they get desirable or undesirable objects can possess evenness of mind.

The two currents of love and hatred (likes and dislikes) make a man think of harming others. When these two are destroyed through meditation on the Self, the Yogi is intent on the welfare of others. He rejoices in doing service to the people. He plunges himself in service. He works constantly for the solidarity or well-being of this world. He gives fearlessness (Abhayadana) to all creatures. No creature is afraid of him. He becomes a Paramahamsa Sannyasi who gives shelter to all in his heart. He attains Self-realisation. He becomes a knower of Brahman. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

By means of the control of the senses the Yogi closes the ten doors (the senses) and withdraws the senses from the sensual objects and fixes the mind on the innermost Self. Those who meditate on the imperishable transcendental Brahman, restraining and subduing the senses, regarding everything equally, rejoicing in the welfare of all beings—these also come to Me. It needs no saying that they reach Myself, because I hold the wise as verily Myself (*Cf.* VII. 18). Further it is not necessary to say that they are the best Yogins as they are one with Brahman Himself. (*Cf.* V. 25; XI. 55)

But—

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥५॥

क्लेशः the trouble, अधिकतरः (is) greater, तेषाम् of those, अव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् whose minds are set on the unmanifested, अव्यक्ता the unmanifested, हि for, गतिः goal, दुःखम् pain, देहवद्भिः by the embodied, अवाप्यते is reached.

5. Greater is their trouble whose minds are set on the unmanifested; for the goal, the unmanifested, is very hard for the embodied to reach.

Commentary: Worshippers of the Saguna (qualified) and the Nirguna (unqualified) Brahman reach the same goal. But the latter path is very hard and arduous, because the aspirant has to give up attachment to the body from the very beginning of his spiritual practice.

The embodied: Those who identify themselves with their bodies. Identification with the body is *Dehabhimana.* The imperishable Brahman is very hard to reach for those who are attached to their bodies. Further, it is extremely difficult to fix the restless mind on the formless and attributeless Brahman. Contemplation on the imperishable, attributeless Brahman demands a very sharp, one-pointed and subtle intellect. The Upanishad says: "*Drisyate tu agraya buddhya sukshmaya sukshmadarsibhih*—It is seen by subtle seers through their subtle intellect."

He who meditates on the unmanifested should possess the *four means (see page 58).* Then he will have to approach a Guru who is well versed in the scriptures and who is also established in Brahman. He will have to hear the Truth from him, then reflect and meditate on It.

He who realises the Nirguna (attributeless) Brahman attains eternal bliss or Self-realisation or Kaivalya (Moksha) which is preceded by the destruction of ignorance with its effects. He who realises the Saguna Brahman (Brahman with attributes) goes to Brahmaloka and enjoys all the wealth and powers of the Lord. He then gets initiation into the mysteries of the Absolute from Hiranyagarbha and without any effort and without the practice of hearing, reflection and meditation attains, through the grace of the Lord alone, the same state as attained by those who have realised the Nirguna Brahman. Through the knowledge of the

Self, ignorance and its effects are destroyed in the case of the worshippers of the Saguna Brahman also.

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥६॥

ये who, तु but, सर्वाणि all, कर्माणि actions, मयि in Me, संन्यस्य renouncing, मत्पराः regarding Me as the supreme goal, अनन्येन single-minded, एव even, योगेन with the Yoga, माम् Me, ध्यायन्तः meditating, उपासते worship.

6. But to those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in Me, regarding Me as the supreme goal, meditating on Me with single-minded Yoga,

Commentary: *Ananya Yoga:* Unswerving Yoga; exclusive, having no other objects of worship or support save the Lord; Samadhi.

Even in Bhakti Yoga one should not abandon actions. He must perform actions but he will have to dedicate the merits or the fruits to the Lord. (*Cf.* IX. 27)

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥७॥

तेषाम् for them, अहम् I, समुद्धर्ता the saviour, मृत्युसंसारसागरात् out of the ocean of the mortal Samsara, भवामि (I) become, नचिरात् ere long, पार्थ O Arjuna, मयि in Me, आवेशितचेतसाम् of those whose minds are set.

7. To those whose minds are set on Me, O Arjuna, verily I become ere long the saviour out of the ocean of Samsara.

Commentary: *Mortal Samsara:* The round of birth and death. The devotee who does total, unconditional and ungrudging self-surrender to the Lord, who places himself completely at the mercy of the Lord, and who fixes his mind on the Lord exclusively, who burns up the fruits of actions by offering them to the Lord and who thus destroys any power in the actions to bear fruit, and who has abandoned even the idea of liberation, is soon lifted by the Lord from the mortal plane to the abode of Immortality.

I redeem such persons who have become 'Macchitta' i.e., 'mind united with Me', from the ocean of the mortal world or worldly life, without delay. (*Cf.* X. 10, 11; XII. 6 and 7)

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥८॥

मयि in Me, एव only, मनः the mind, आधत्स्व fix, मयि in Me, बुद्धिम् (thy) intellect, निवेशय place, निवसिष्यसि thou shalt live, मयि in Me, एव alone, अतः ऊर्ध्वम् hereafter, न not, संशयः doubt.

8. Fix thy mind in Me only, thy intellect in Me, (then) thou shalt no doubt live in Me alone hereafter.

Commentary: *Fix thy mind* means 'thy purposes and thoughts' *in Me* 'the Lord in the Cosmic Form'. Give up entirely all thoughts of sensual objects. Fix in Me thy intellect also—the faculty which resolves and determines.

What will be the result then? Thou shalt undoubtedly live in Me as Myself. O Arjuna, of this there is no doubt whatsoever.

The Yoga of meditation is described in this verse. (*Cf.* VIII. 7; X. 9; XI. 34; XVIII. 65)

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ॥९॥

अथ if, चित्तम् the mind, समाधातुम् to fix, न not, शक्नोषि (thou) art able, मयि in Me, स्थिरम् steadily, अभ्यासयोगेन by the Yoga of constant practice, ततः them, माम् Me, इच्छ wish, आप्तुम् to reach, धनञ्जय O Arjuna.

9. If thou art unable to fix thy mind steadily on Me, then by the Yoga of constant practice do thou seek to reach Me, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Abhyasa Yoga:* Abhyasa is constant practice to steady the mind and fix it on one point; the practice of repeatedly withdrawing the mind from all sorts of sensual objects and fixing it again and again on one particular object or the Self. The constant effort to separate or detach oneself from the illusory five sheaths and identify oneself with the Atman is also Abhyasa. If you are not able to fix your mind and intellect wholly on the Lord all the time, then do it for some time at least. If your mind wanders much, try to fix it on the Lord through the continuous practice of remembrance. Resort to the worship of the images of God, feeling His Living Presence in them. This will also help you.

Why did Lord Krishna address Arjuna by the name Dhananjaya here? Surely there is some significance. Arjuna conquered many people and brought immense wealth for the Rajasuya Yajna performed by Yudhishthira. For such a man of great powers and splendour, it is not difficult to conquer this mind, and obtain the spiritual wealth of knowledge of the Self. This is what Lord Krishna meant when He addressed Arjuna by the name Dhananjaya.

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥१०॥

अभ्यासे in practice, अपि also, असमर्थः not capable, असि (thou) art, मत्कर्मपरमः intent on doing actions for My sake, भव be, मदर्थम् for My sake, अपि also, कर्माणि actions, कुर्वन् by doing, सिद्धिम् perfection, अवाप्स्यसि thou shalt attain.

10. If thou art unable to practise even this Abhyasa Yoga, be thou intent on doing actions for My sake; even by doing actions for My sake, thou shalt attain perfection.

Commentary: Even if thou doest mere actions for My sake without practising Yoga thou shalt attain perfection. Thou shalt first attain purity of mind, then Yoga (concentration and meditation), then knowledge and then ultimately perfection (Moksha or liberation). Serving humanity with Narayana Bhava (feeling that one is serving the Lord in all) is also doing actions for the sake of the Lord. Such service should go hand in hand with worship of God and meditation.

If you are not able to practise the Yoga of meditation mentioned in verse 8 or the Yoga of constant practice mentioned in verse 9, hear the glorious stories connected with the Lord by attending religious discourses conducted by the devotees of the Lord, sing Kirtan and the praises of the Lord.

Practise the nine kinds of Bhagavata Dharma (the nine modes of devotion), viz., (1) hearing the Lilas (glorious and divine sports) of the Lord (Sravana), (2) singing His Names (Kirtana), (3) constant remembrance of the Lord and constant repetition of His Names or Mantras (Smarana), (4) service of His feet (Padasevana), (5) offering flowers in worship (Archana), (6) doing prostrations to the Lord (Vandana), (7) becoming His servant (Dasya), (8) friendship with Him (Sakhya), and (9) doing total self-surrender to the Lord (Atmanivedana). (*Cf.* III. 19; XI. 55)

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥११॥

अथ if, एतत् this, अपि also, अशक्तः unable, असि (thou) art, कर्तुम् to do, मद्योगम् My Yoga, आश्रितः resorting to, सर्वकर्मफलत्यागम् the renunciation of the fruits of all actions, ततः then, कुरु do, यतात्मवान् self-controlled.

11. If thou art unable to do even this, then, resorting to union with Me, renounce the fruits of all actions with the self controlled.

Commentary: This is the easiest path. If thou art unable to perform actions for My sake, if thou canst not even be intent on My service, if thou art unable to practise the Bhagavata Dharmas, if thou wishest to do actions impelled by personal desires, then do thou perform them (for your sake from a sense of duty) renouncing them all in Me and also abandon the fruits of all actions, at the same time practising self-control.

In verse 8 the Yoga of meditation is prescribed for advanced students; in verse 9 the Yoga of constant practice; if one finds that, too, to be difficult, the performance of actions for the sake of the Lord alone has been taught in verse 10; and those who cannot do even this are asked to abandon the fruits of all actions.

Madyogam: My Yoga. Surrendering all actions and their fruits to Me is My Yoga.

Yatatmavan: The man of discrimination who has controlled all the senses, who has withdrawn the senses from sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

Now the Lord eulogises the renunciation of the fruits of all actions in order to encourage the aspirants to practise the Yoga of renunciation of the fruits of actions.

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥१२॥

श्रेयः better, हि indeed. ज्ञानम् kowledge, अभ्यासात् than practice, ज्ञानात् than knowledge, ध्यानम् meditation, विशिष्यते excels, ध्यानात् than meditation, कर्मफलत्यागः the renunciation of the fruits of actions, त्यागात् from renunciation, शान्तिः peace, अनन्तरम् immediately.

12. Better indeed is knowledge than practice; than knowledge meditation is better; than meditation the renunciation of the fruits of actions: peace immediately follows renunciation.

Commentary: Theoretical or indirect knowledge of Brahman gained from the scriptures is better than the practice (of restraining the modifications of the mind or worship of idols or self-mortification for the purpose of control of the mind and the senses) accompanied with ignorance. Meditation is better than theoretical knowledge. Renunciation of the fruits of actions is better than meditation. Renunciation of the fruits of all actions as a means to the attainment of supreme peace or Moksha is merely eulogised here by the declaration of the superiority of one over the other to encourage Arjuna (and other spiritual aspirants) to practise Nishkama Karma Yoga, to create a strong desire in them to take up the Yoga of selfless action, in the same manner as by saying that the ocean was drunk by the Brahmana sage Agastya even the Brahmanas of this age are extolled because they are also Brahmanas.

Desire is an enemy of peace. Desire causes restlessness of the mind. Desire is the source of all human miseries, sorrows and troubles. Stop the play of desire through discrimination, dispassion and enquiry into the nature of the Self; then you will enjoy supreme peace.

Renunciation of the fruits of actions. is prescribed for the purification of the aspirant's heart. It annihilates desire, the enemy of wisdom. The sage, too, renounces the fruits of actions. It has become natural to him to do so.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥१३॥

अद्वेष्टा non-hater, सर्वभूतानाम् of (to) all creatures, मैत्रः friendly, करुणः compassionate, एव even, च and, निर्ममः without mineness, निरहङ्कारः without egoism, समदुःखसुखः balanced in pleasure and pain, क्षमी forgiving.

13. He who hates no creature, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving,

Commentary: Lord Krishna gives a description of the nature of a Bhagavata or a sage in the following eight verses. These eight verses are called '*Amritashtakam*'.

The devotee who is established in God bears ill-will to none. He looks on all with love and great compassion. He regards all beings as himself. He does not hate even a single being, not even the creature which gives him intense pain. He who entertains mercy towards suffering people and tries to relieve their sufferings is a man of *Karuna.* He puts himself in the position of the sufferer and feels the pain himself. Mercy is a divine attribute. God is all-merciful. If you wish to hold communion with the Lord, and if you desire to attain Godhead, you must also become all-merciful.

The perfect devotee offers full security of life (Abhayadana) to all beings. He is a Paramahamsa Sannyasi. The devotee only can really understand the mysterious ways of the Lord. He beholds the Lord everywhere. He sees the Lord in all creatures. That is the reason why he has equal vision. He is like the sun or the river. The sun sheds its light equally on a palace or a cottage. Anyone can drink the water of a river. A river quenches the thirst of cows as well as tigers and lions. The idea of 'mine-ness' and 'I-ness' never arises in the devotee's mind. He has no sense of 'mine' and 'thine'. He is indifferent to pleasure and pain. He is not attached to pleasant objects. He does not hate the objects that give him pain. He is as forgiving as the earth. He is not affected a bit when anybody insults, abuses or beats him.

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१४॥

सन्तुष्टः contented, सततम् ever, योगी Yogi, यतात्मा self-controlled, दृढनिश्चयः possessed of firm conviction, मयि अर्पितमनोबुद्धिः with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, यः who, मद्भक्तः My devotee, सः he, मे to Me, प्रियः dear.

14. Ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with the mind and intellect dedicated to Me, he, My devotee, is dear to Me.

Commentary: He knows that all that comes to him is the fruit of his own actions in the past and so he is ever contented. He does not endeavour to attain the finite or perishable objects. He fixes his mind and intellect on the Supreme Being or the Absolute, attains eternal satisfaction and stands adamant like yonder rock, amidst the vicissitudes of time.

Contentment ever dwells in the heart of My devotee. Like the ocean which is ever full, his heart is ever full as he has no cravings. He is ever cheerful and joyous. He has a feeling of fullness whether or not he gets the means for the bare sustenance of his body. He is satisfied with a little thing and he does not care whether it is good or not. He never grumbles, complains or murmurs when he does not obtain food and clothing which are necessary for the maintenance of the body. His mind is ever filled with Me through constant and steady meditation.

Yogi: He who has evenness of mind always. He has controlled all the senses and desires. With a firm determination he has fixed his mind and intellect on Me in a spirit of perfect self-surrender. He is endowed with a firm conviction regarding the essential nature of the Self. He who has the knowledge through Self-realisation, "I am *Asanga Akarta Suddha Satchidananda Svayamprakasa Advitiya Brahman*" (unattached, non-doer, pure, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, self-luminous, non-dual Brahman) is a sage of firm determination. He has given to Me exclusively his mind (the faculty that wills and doubts) and the intellect (the faculty that determines). He is dear to Me as life itself. Such a comparison falls far short of the reality.

The same thing which was said by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in chapter VII. 17, "I am very dear to the wise and he is very dear to Me," is here described in detail.

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥१५॥

यस्मात् for whom, न not, उद्विजते is agitated, लोकः the world, लोकात् from the world, न not, उद्विजते is agitated, च and, यः who, हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैः by (from) joy, wrath, fear and anxiety, मुक्तः freed, यः who, सः he, च and, मे to Me, प्रियः dear.

15. He by whom the world is not agitated and who cannot be agitated by the world, and who is freed from joy, anger, fear and anxiety—he is dear to Me.

Commentary: *Harsha:* Joy, exhilaration of the mind when one obtains an object of desire. This is indicated by hair standing on end, tears flowing down the face, etc.

Amarsha: Anger. Some say that it is a mixture of jealousy and anger.

Udvega: Anxiety, worry, sorrow, discomfiture.

The knower of Brahman or the devotee of the Lord never injures any creature in thought, word and deed. He gives security of life to all creatures. Therefore, no creature is afraid of him. The sage feels that the world is his body, his own Self. How can he be afraid of the world then? He never hurts others and is not hurt by the words or deeds of others.

The mental modifications of joy, envy, fear and anxiety leave the sage or devotee of their own accord, just as the beasts and birds leave the forest when it is on fire.

Such a sage or devotee is dear to Me. How can I describe him?

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१६॥

अनपेक्षः (he who is) free from wants, शुचिः pure, दक्षः expert, उदासीनः unconcerned, गतव्यथः free from pain, सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी

renouncing all undertakings or commencements, यः who, मद्भक्तः My devotee, सः he, मे to Me, प्रियः dear.

16. He who is free from wants, pure, expert, unconcerned, and free from pain, renouncing all undertakings or commencements—he who is (thus) devoted to Me, is dear to Me.

Commentary: He is free from dependence. He is indifferent to the body, the senses, the objects of the senses and their mutual connections. He has external and internal purity. External purity is attained through earth and water (washing and bathing). Inner purity is attained by the eradication of likes and dislikes, lust, anger, jealousy, etc., and through the cultivation of the virtues—friendship (towards equals), compassion (towards those who are inferior) and complacency (towards superiors).

Daksha: Prompt, swift and skilful in all actions; expert. He is able to decide rightly and immediately in matters that demand prompt attention and action.

Udasina: He who does not take up the side of a friend and the like (in a controversy); he who is indifferent to whatever happens.

Gatavyathah: He who is free from pain. He is not troubled even if he is beaten by a wicked man. He is not pained or afflicted by any result of any action or any happening.

Sarvarambhaparityagi: He habitually renounces all actions calculated to secure the objects of enjoyment, whether of this world or of the next. He has abandoned all egoistic, personal and mental initiative in all actions, mental and physical. He has merged his will in the cosmic will. He allows the divine will to work through him. He has neither preference nor personal desire and so he is swift, prompt and skilful in all actions. The divine will works through him in a dynamic manner.

Such a devotee is My own Self and so he is very dear to Me.

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥१७॥

यः who, न not, हृष्यति rejoices, न not, द्वेष्टि hates, न not, शोचति grieves, न not, काङ्क्षति desires, शुभाशुभपरित्यागी renouncing good and evil, भक्तिमान् full of devotion, यः who, सः he, मे to Me, प्रियः dear.

17. He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing good and evil, and who is full of devotion, is dear to Me.

Commentary: What is described in verse 13 is dealt with at length in this.

He does not rejoice when he attains the desirable objects. He does not hate when he gets the undesirable objects. He does not grieve when he parts with his beloved objects. He does not desire the unattained.

Subhasubhaparityagi: Here is a further description of *Sarvarambhaparityagi* of verse 16. He who has renounced good and evil actions which produce pleasure and pain is a devotee of the Lord.

Such a devotee or knower of Brahman, who is My own Self, is dear to Me. (*Cf.* VII. 17; IX. 29)

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥१८॥

समः (he who is) the same, शत्रौ to foe, च and, मित्रे to friend, च and, तथा also, मानापमानयोः in honour and dishonour, शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, समः the same, सङ्गविवर्जितः free from attachment.

18. He who is the same to foe and friend, and also in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat and in pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment,

Commentary: The ordinary man of the world is ruled by the pairs of opposites, honour and dishonour, cold and heat and pleasure and pain; but a Yogi or a sage or a devotee (Bhagavata) has a balanced mind. He has poise or equanimity. He is not at all swayed by the blind forces of attraction and repulsion.

He who does wrong to others is a foe. He who does good to others is a friend.

The devotee or the sage has no attachment for objects of any kind.

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येनकेनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥१९॥

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः to whom censure and praise are equal, मौनी —silent, सन्तुष्टः contented, येनकेनचित् with anything, अनिकेतः homeless, स्थिरमतिः steady-minded, भक्तिमान् full of devotion, मे to Me, प्रियः dear, नरः (that) man.

19. He to whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, of a steady mind, and full of devotion—that man is dear to Me.

Commentary: He is neither elated by praise nor pained by censure. He keeps a balanced state of mind. He has controlled the organ of speech and so he is silent. His mind also is serene and silent as he has controlled the thoughts also. He is quite content with the bare means of bodily sustenance. It is said in the Mahabharata (Santi Parva, Moksha Dharma): "Who is dressed in anything, who eats any kind of food, who lies down anywhere, him the gods call a Brahmana or a liberated sage or Jivanmukta."

He does not dwell in one place. He has no fixed abode. He is homeless. He regards the world as his dwelling place. His mind is ever fixed on Brahman. (*Cf.* VII. 17; IX. 29; XII. 17)

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
श्रद्दधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥२०॥

ये who, तु indeed, धर्म्यामृतम् immortal Dharma (Law), इदम् this, यथोक्तम् as declared (above), पर्युपासते follow, श्रद्दधानाः endowed with faith, मत्परमाः regarding Me as their Supreme, भक्ताः devotees, ते they, अतीव exceedingly, मे to Me, प्रियाः dear.

20. They verily who follow this immortal Dharma (law or doctrine) as described above, endowed with faith, regarding Me as their supreme goal, they, the devotees, are exceedingly dear to Me.

Commentary: The Blessed Lord has in this verse given a description of His excellent devotee.

Amrita Dharma: Amrita is the life-giving nectar. *Dharma* is righteousness or wisdom. Dharma is that which leads to immortality when practised. The real devotees regard Me as their final or supreme refuge.

Above: Beginning with verse 13.

A great truth that should not go unnoticed is that the devotee, the man of wisdom and the Yogi have all the same fundamental characteristics.

Priyo hi Jnaninotyartham (I am exceedingly dear to the wise man) (VII. 17) has thus been explained at length and concluded here thus, *Te ativa me priyah* (they are exceedingly dear to Me).

He who follows this immortal Dharma as described above becomes exceedingly dear to the Lord. Therefore, every aspirant who thirsts for salvation, and who longs to attain the Supreme Abode of the Lord should follow this immortal Dharma with zeal and intense faith.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the twelfth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Devotion.

अथ त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः

THIRTEENTH DISCOURSE

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE FIELD AND THE KNOWER OF THE FIELD

अर्जुन उवाच

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च ।
एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव ॥

प्रकृतिम् the Prakriti (matter), पुरुषम् the Purusha (Spirit or Soul), च and, एव even, क्षेत्रम् the field, क्षेत्रज्ञम् the knower of the field, एव even, च and, एतत् this, वेदितुम् to know, इच्छामि (I) wish, ज्ञानम् knowledge, ज्ञेयम् what ought to be known, च and, केशव O Kesava.

Arjuna said:

I wish to learn about Nature (matter) and the Spirit (soul), the field and the knower of the field, knowledge and that which ought to be known, O Kesava.

Commentary: In some of the books you will not find this verse. If you include this verse also, the number of verses of the Bhagavad Gita will come to 701. Some commentators look upon this verse as an interpolation.

We have come to the beginning of the third section of the Gita. Essentially the same knowledge is taught in this section but there are more details.

This discourse on Kshetra (matter) is commenced with a view to determine the essential nature of the possessor of the two Prakritis (Natures), the lower and the higher, described in chapter VII, verses 4 and 5.

In the previous discourse a description of the devotee who is dear to the Lord is given from verse 13 to the end. Now the question arises: What sort of knowledge of Truth should he possess? The answer is given in this discourse.

Nature is composed of the three qualities. It transforms itself into the body, senses and the sensual objects to serve the two purposes of the individual soul, viz., Bhoga (enjoyment) and Apavarga (liberation).

The Gita is divided into three sections illustrative of the three words of the Mahavakya or Great Sentence of the Sama Veda—*Tat-Tvam-Asi* (That thou art). In accordance with this view the first six chapters deal with the path of action or Karma Yoga and the nature of the *thou (Tvam-Pada).* The next six chapters explain the path of devotion or Bhakti Yoga and the nature of *That (Tat-Pada).* The last six chapters treat of the path of knowledge or Jnana Yoga and the nature of the middle term *art (Asi-Pada)* which establishes the identity of the individual and the Supreme Soul *(Jiva Brahma Aikyam).*

Arjuna now wishes to know in detail the difference between Prakriti and Purusha (Matter and Spirit). He desires to have a discriminative knowledge of the difference between them.

श्री भगवानुवाच

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥१॥

इदम् this, शरीरम् body, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti (Arjuna), क्षेत्रम् the field, इति thus, अभिधीयते is called, एतत् this, यः who, वेत्ति knows, तम् him, प्राहुः (they) call, क्षेत्रज्ञः the knower of the field, इति thus, तद्विदः the knowers of that.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. This body, O Arjuna, is called the field; he who knows it is called the knower of the field, by those who know of them.

Commentary: *Kshetra* literally means 'field'. The body is so called because the fruits (harvest) of actions in the form of pleasure and pain are reaped in it as in a field. The physical, the mental and the causal bodies go to constitute the totality of the field. It is not the physical body alone that forms the field.

He who knows the field and he who beholds it as distinct from himself through knowledge is the knower of the field or matter.

Those who know them: The sages.

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ।।२।।

क्षेत्रज्ञम् the knower of the field, च and, अपि also, माम् Me, विद्धि know, सर्वक्षेत्रेषु in all fields, भारत O descendant of Bharata (Arjuna), क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोः of the field and of the knower of the field, ज्ञानम् knowledge, यत् which, तत् that, ज्ञानम् knowledge, मतम् is considered to be, मम My.

2. Do thou also know Me as the knower of the field in all fields, O Arjuna. Knowledge of both the field and the knower of the field is considered by Me to be *the* knowledge.

Commentary: The fields are different but the knower of the field is one. The individual souls (Jivatmas) are different but the Supreme Soul (Paramatma) is one. Wherever there is mind, there are life-breath, egoism and the individual consciousness or reflected intelligence side by side. He who has the sense of duality will take birth again and again. This delusion of duality can only be removed by knowledge of the identity of the individual soul and the Absolute. "I am happy", "I am miserable", "I am the doer of this action", and "I am the enjoyer of this experience"—these are the experiences of all human beings. Therefore the individual soul is bound to Samsara and is subject to pleasure and pain, and the individual souls are in different bodies. But, the Supreme Soul is free from pleasure and pain. It is not bound to Samsara. It is eternally free. It is one without a second.

If there is only one individual soul in all bodies, all should have the same experience at the same time. If Rama suffers from abdominal colic, Krishna also should experience the pain at the same time. If John experiences joy, Jacob also should have a similar experience. If Choudhury is stung by a scorpion, Banerjee also should suffer from the pain. But this is not the case. When Rama suffers, Krishna rejoices. When John is jubilant, Jacob is depressed. When Choudhury suffers from the sting of a scorpion, Banerjee is enjoying his breakfast. Fields are different, bodies are different, minds are different and the individual souls are different from each other. But the knower in all these fields is one. Pleasure and pain are the Dharmas (functions) of the mind only. The individual soul is in essence identical with the Supreme Soul.

The knower of the field or the Self is not affected by pleasure and pain, virtue and vice. He is the silent witness only. Pleasure and pain are the functions of the mind. They are ascribed to the Self through ignorance. The ignorant man regards the physical body as the Self. He is swayed by the two currents of likes and dislikes, he does virtuous and vicious actions and reaps the fruits of these actions, viz., pleasure and pain, and takes birth again and again. But the sage who knows that the Kshetrajna or the knower of the field or the Self is distinct from the body is not swayed by likes and dislikes. He identifies himself with the pure, eternal Absolute or the Supreme Self and is always happy and 'actionless', though he performs actions for the welfare of humanity.

The disease of *Timira* (partial blindness) which causes perception of what is contrary to truth pertains to the eye but not to the man who perceives. If the disease is removed by proper treatment he perceives things in their true light. Even so ignorance, doubt, pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, likes and dislikes, false perceptions as well as their cause belong to the instrument (the mind) but not to the silent witness, the knower of the field, the Self.

In the state of liberation wherein there is annihilation of the mind, there is no ignorance and the play of the two currents of likes and dislikes does not exist there. If false perception, ignorance, pleasure and pain, doubt, bondage, delusion, sorrow, etc., were the essential properties of the Self, just as heat is the essential property of fire, they could not be got rid of at any time. But there have been sages of Self-realisation in the past like Sankara, Dattatreya, Jada Bharata and Yajnavalkya who possessed extraordinary supersensual or intuitional knowledge, who were free from false perception, doubt, fear, delusion, sorrow, etc. They were not conscious of Samsara but they had perfect awareness of the Self. Therefore, we will have to conclude that the Self is ever free, pure, perfect, eternal and that ignorance inheres in the instrument (the mind) and not in the Self.

Ignorance born of Tamas acts as a veil and prevents man from knowing his essential nature as the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. It causes perception of what is quite the contrary of truth and causes doubt or non-perception of truth. As soon as knowledge of the Self dawns these three forms of ignorance vanish *in toto.* Therefore these three forms of ignorance are not the attributes of the Self. They belong to the mind, the organ or the instrument. Mind is only an effect or a product of ignorance.

The wheel of Samsara or the world-process rotates on account of ignorance. It exists only for the ignorant man who perceives the world as it appears to him.

There is no Samsara for a liberated sage. Any disease of the eye cannot in any way affect the sun (the deity presiding over the eye). The breaking of the pot will not in any way affect the ether or space in the pot. The water of the mirage cannot render the earth moist. Even so ignorance and its effects cannot in the least affect the pure, subtle, attributeless, formless, limbless, partless and self-luminous Kshetrajna or the Self. Ignorance does not touch the Self. (*Cf.* X. 20; XIII. 32; XVIII. 61)

तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥३॥

तत् that, क्षेत्रम् field, यत् which, च and, यादृक् what like, च and, यद्विकारि what its modifications, यतः whence, च and, यत् what, सः He, च and, यः who, यत्प्रभावः what His powers, च and, तत् that, समासेन in brief, मे from Me, शृणु hear.

3. What the field is and of what nature, what are its modifications and whence it is and also who He is and what His powers are—hear all that from Me in brief.

Commentary: I will tell you, O Arjuna, what the field is, why the body is called the field, what are its modifications or changes; in other words what transformations it undergoes, what are its properties, what effects arise in it from what causes, to whom it belongs, whether it is cultivated or whether it grows wild.

That field refers to the field mentioned in verse 1.

Who He is: Who is that knower of the field? What are His powers (*Prabhavas* are powers such as the power of seeing, hearing, etc.) which originate from the limiting adjuncts (such as the eyes, the ears, etc.)? Do thou hear My speech which describes succinctly the real nature of the field and the knower of the field in all these specific aspects.

O Arjuna, I am quite sure that thou wilt clearly comprehend the truth on hearing My speech.

The body is the field. The ten senses represent the ten bulls. The bulls work unceasingly day and night through the field of the objects of the senses. The mind is the supervisor. The individual soul is the tenant. The five vital airs (Pranas) are the five labourers. The Primordial Nature is the mistress of the field. This field is Her property. She Herself watches over the field vigilantly. She is endowed with the three qualities. Rajas sows the seed; Sattva guards it; Tamas reaps the harvest. On the threshing floor of Mahat-Tattva (the cosmic mind) with the help of the ox called time, She—Primordial Nature—thrashes out the corn. If the individual soul does evil actions, it sows the seeds of sin, manures with evil, reaps a crop of sin, and undergoes the pains of Samsara, viz., birth, decay, old age, sickness, and the three kinds of afflictions. If it does virtuous actions it sows the good seeds of virtue and reaps a crop of happiness.

Lord Krishna now speaks very highly in the following verse of the true nature of the field and the knower of the field in order to create interest in the hearer.

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥४॥

ऋषिभिः by Rishis, बहुधा in many ways, गीतम् sung, छन्दोभिः in chants, विविधैः various, पृथक् distinctive, ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैः in the suggestive words indicative of Brahman, च and, एव even, हेतुमद्भिः full of reasoning, विनिश्चितैः decisive.

4. Sages have sung in many ways, in various distinctive chants and also in the suggestive words indicative of the Absolute, full of reasoning and decisive.

Commentary: Many *sages* (such as Vasishtha) have talked about it (the true nature of the field and its knower) since ancient times. The *ancient hymns,* such as the Rig Veda, have explained this in various ways.

The word *Brahma Sutras* refers to the Vedanta Sutras written by Vyasa or Badarayanacharya in order to reconcile the mutually contradictory passages in the Upanishads. A study of the Brahma Sutras is very necessary in order to comprehend the esoteric significance of the Upanishads. The Brahma Sutras are also known by the name *Sariraka Sutras* because fifteen Sutras in the third Pada of the second chapter deal with the Sarira or Kshetra (body).

The true nature of the field and its knower has also been taught in the Brahma Sutras which deal with Brahman such as *Atmanyevopasita* (only as the Self, let a man meditate on It.) (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I. 4. 7).

They are full of reasoning, convincing and decisive. There is no doubt in the words or passages that treat of Brahman.

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥५॥

महाभूतानि the great elements, अहङ्कारः egoism, बुद्धिः intellect, अव्यक्तम् the unmanifested (Mula-Prakriti), एव even, च and, इन्द्रियाणि the senses, दश ten, एकम् one, च and, पञ्च five, च and, इन्द्रियगोचराः objects of the senses.

5. The great elements, egoism, intellect, and also the Unmanifested Nature, the ten senses and one (mind), and the five objects of the senses,

Commentary: The field and its modifications are described in this verse. The twenty-four principles of the Sankhya school of philosophy are mentioned here.

Great elements: Earth, water, fire, air and ether are so called because they pervade all modifications of matter. The elements here referred to are the subtle, not the gross ones.

Egoism is the cause of the great elements. It is the self-arrogating principle. Intellect is the cause of egoism. The function of the intellect is determination. Buddhi is the faculty of determination. The cause of the intellect is the Unmanifested (which is the undifferentiated energy of the Lord). *(Cf.* VII. 14: *Daivi hyesha gunamayi mama maya duratyaya*—This divine illusion of Mine, caused by the qualities, is difficult to cross over.) The above Nature is divided eightfold (*Cf.* VII. 4).

The ten senses are the five organs of knowledge (ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose), so called because they enable the mind to get knowledge of the external world, and the five organs of action (hands, feet, mouth, anus and the generative organ), so called because they perform actions.

The one: This is the mind. This is the eleventh sense whose function is thinking and doubting (Sankalpa and Vikalpa).

The five objects of the senses are sound, touch, form (colour), taste and smell. These are the fivefold pastures of the senses.

All the great elements, egoism, intellect, the senses and mind are all absorbed in the Unmanifested at the time of the cosmic dissolution.

Mind is Maya. Mind is Avidya (ignorance). Mind is at the root of all activities. It gives strength to desires, fosters fear and builds castles in the air. It confers force on egoism and stimulates aspirations. Every tendency has its origin in the mind. It augments passions, gives strength to hope and awakens the sense of duality. It increases ignorance and plunges the senses in the ocean of sense-objects. It creates distinctions and differences. It separates, divides and limits. It is a strong wall or an iron barrier that stands between the individual soul and the Absolute. It is this mind that has brought Brahman to the condition of the individual soul. It is the storehouse of error, cravings, doubt, delusion and ignorance. It is an ever-revolving wheel that generates thoughts. It is a miraculous thought-producing machine. It creates at one moment. It destroys at the next moment.

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्घातश्चेतनाधृतिः ।
एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥६॥

इच्छा desire, द्वेषः hatred, सुखम् pleasure, दुःखम् pain, सङ्घातः the aggregate, चेतना intelligence, धृतिः fortitude, एतत् this, क्षेत्रम् field, समासेन briefly, सविकारम् with modifications, उदाहृतम् has been described.

6. Desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate (the body), intelligence, fortitude—the field has thus been briefly described with its modifications.

Commentary: These principles form the frame or the skeleton on which the world of forms is built. All these are mental states and treated as properties of the body by the Sankhya school of thought. According to the Nyaya-Vaiseshika schools, these are the inherent qualities of the Self. The modifications have a beginning and an end. Only that which is unchanging can be the witness of these modifications. The knower of the field is unchanging. He is the witness of the field and its modifications.

Desire is a modification of the mind. It is an earnest longing for an object. It is a Vritti (thought-wave) born of Rajas which urges a man who has once experienced a certain object of pleasure to get hold of it as conducive to his pleasure when he beholds the same object again. This is the property of the inner sense. It is the field because it is knowable.

You enjoy a certain sensual object. The impression of this is produced in the subconscious mind. This impression is vivified or revived through memory or remembrance of the sensual pleasure. Then desire arises to enjoy the object again. Repetition of the sensual enjoyment intensifies the memory and desire. Renunciation of the objects and meditation thin out the impressions and the desires.

If anyone gives a description of the beautiful scenery of Badri Narayana or Mount Kailasa at once a desire arises in our minds to visit those places. If a man says that very good sweetmeats and mangoes are available in Bangalore, a desire to get these objects crops up in your mind. Therefore memory of sensual enjoyments and the hearing of the qualities of the sensual objects are the root causes of desires. Hope fattens the desires. Hope gives a new lease of life to desires. Desire excites the mind and the senses. Desire makes the mind restless. Desire makes the mind wander in the sensual grooves.

An object which is sweet and pleasant to you at one moment produces the very reverse of that sensation at another moment. Everyone of you might have had this experience. Objects are pleasant only when there is a longing for them. But they are unpleasant when there is no longing for them. Therefore desires are the cause of pleasure. If satisfaction arises through enjoyment of the objects, pleasure will cease. If your mind is destitute of desires then you will always enjoy serenity, equanimity, balance or poise in spite of many obstacles or adversities. The foundation of desire is the love of sensual pleasures. Desires run along the path of your inclination, proclivity or tendency or taste. Desire is the fuel. Thought is the fire. If you withdraw the fuel of desire, the fire of thought will be extinguished like an oil-less lamp. The intellect becomes impure by association with desires.

Hatred is a modification of the mind. It is a negative one. It is a Vritti that impels a man who experienced pain from a certain object to dislike it when he beholds the same object again. Hatred also is *field* because it is knowable. The modification that arises in the mind when your desire is not fulfilled is called hatred.

Pleasure is agreeable, peaceful, made of Sattva. This is also the field because it is knowable.

Pain is disagreeable or unpleasant. It is also the field because it is knowable.

Sanghata: Aggregate, the combination of the body and the senses or the bundle of the 35 components of the body.

Chetana: Intelligence is a mental state which manifests itself in the aggregate just as fire manifests itself in a ball of iron.

This is also the field because it is knowable. Chetana means consciousness and also the activity of the vital airs.

Dhriti: Firmness, courage, fortitude. It is a Sattvic modification of the mind. The body, the senses and the mind are sustained by firmness when they are depressed and agitated. The five elements are antagonistic to each other. Water destroys earth. Fire dries up water. Water puts out fire. Wind puts out a lamp (fire). Ether absorbs the wind. The five elements fight amongst themselves and yet they (that have a natural dislike for one another) dwell together quite amicably in the same body. Each element beautifully cooperates with the others in carrying on the common functions of the body harmoniously. Each element nourishes the other elements also with its own qualities. Dhriti is firmness or the power by which these fighting elements are held in union and harmony and kept in a state of steadiness and balance. This is also the field because it is knowable.

Desire and the other qualities that are spoken of in this verse stand for all the qualities of the mind. The field that is mentioned in the first verse has been dealt with in all its different forms in the fifth and the sixth verses.

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ।।७।।

अमानित्वम् humility, अदम्भित्वम् unpretentiousness, अहिंसा non-injury, क्षान्तिः forgiveness, आर्जवम् uprightness, आचार्योपासनम् service of the teacher, शौचम् purity, स्थैर्यम् steadiness, आत्मविनिग्रहः self-control.

7. Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury, forgiveness, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control,

Commentary: These are the qualities that constitute wisdom or lead to wisdom. These are the attributes of the man whose mind is turned towards the inner wisdom. If these characteristics are seen in a man in their entirety, you can infer that the knowledge of the Self has dawned in him.

Humility: It is the negation of vanity. It is absence of self-esteem or self-praise. The basis of pride is the consciousness of possessing something (wealth, knowledge, strength, beauty and virtuous qualities) in a larger measure than others. A proud man possesses at least something but a man of vanity possesses nothing and yet he thinks he is superior to others. Vanity is exaggerated pride. A humble man dislikes respect, honour and praise. He shuns fame and distinction. He never shows his knowledge, ability, prowess, etc. He never praises himself.

Absence of hypocrisy: Hypocrisy is the desire to appear what one is not. A Sannyasi has some virtues and a little theoretical knowledge derived from books. He pretends to be a liberated sage. This is religious hypocrisy. A man in whom this is absent is simple and modest. He never advertises his own virtuous qualities in order to get respect, name and worship from others. He will never disclose any meritorious or charitable act done by him. He is free from pedantry. He will never sell his knowledge in order to achieve fame.

Ahimsa: Non-injuring of any living being in thought, word and deed. He who practises Ahimsa places his feet very carefully on the ground and avoids stepping on any living creature. If he perceives any living creature in front of him he stops and turns to the other side. His heart is full of compassion.

Kshanti: Forbearance, patience, forgiveness. This is a true symptom of knowledge. The man of wisdom puts up with everything. He is not affected a bit when others injure him. He never retaliates. He bears insult and injury calmly.

Arjavam: Straightforwardness. The man of wisdom is upright or straightforward. He is free from cunningness or diplomacy, double-dealing or crookedness. He is quite frank, candid or open-hearted. He does not hide anything. His thoughts and words agree. He speaks his mind openly to the people. He is as simple as a child in his speech. He has a heart as pure as a crystal. He never cheats others.

Service of the teacher: Devotion to the preceptor, worship of the Guru; doing acts of service to him who teaches Brahma-Vidya or the means of attaining liberation. Acharya is the Master in whom the divine wisdom is embodied. Service of the Guru enables the aspirant to attain Self-realisation. The aspirant adores his Guru as Brahman, God Himself. He worships him as Lord Vishnu. He superimposes on him all the attributes of Brahman or Lord Vishnu. He realises Brahman in and through his Guru. This is the fruit of devotion to the Guru. For a student of Vedanta devotion to the Guru is absolutely necessary. Even for a correct understanding of the scriptures the guidance of a Guru is necessary.

Purity is of two kinds, external and internal purity. External purity is cleansing of the physical body with earth and water. Internal purity is cleansing of the mind of the dirt of attachment, hatred and other passions, by the method of Pratipaksha Bhavana, i.e., by cultivating the opposite positive virtues, and by the recognition of the evil in all objects of the senses.

Steadfastness: The aspirant never leaves his efforts on the path of salvation even though he comes across many stumbling blocks on the path. This is steadfastness or firmness. No meditation on Brahman is possible with a fickle mind.

Self-control is control of the aggregate of the body and the senses. The senses and the body which naturally run externally towards the sensual objects are checked and directed on to the path of salvation. No meditation is possible in a body wherein the senses are out of control and distract attention.

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥८॥

इन्द्रियार्थेषु in sense-objects, वैराग्यम् dispassion, अनहङ्कारः absence of egoism, एव even, च and, जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् perception of evil in birth, old age, sickness and pain.

8. Indifference to the objects of the senses and also absence of egoism; perception of (or reflection on) the evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain,

Commentary: The feeling of renunciation towards the objects of the senses is constant in the man of wisdom. He does not even like to talk about them. His senses do not run towards them.

Vairagyam: Indifference to the sense-objects such as sound, touch, etc., for pleasure seen or unseen, heard or unheard (for pleasure in heaven, too).

Anahankara: The idea that arises in the mind: "I am superior to all," is egoism. Absence of this idea is Anahankara or absence of egoism.

Reflection on the evils and miseries of birth, death, old age and sickness: One has to dwell in the womb for nine months and to undergo the pangs of birth. These are the evils of birth. The man of wisdom never forgets the troubles of birth, death, old age, etc. He wants to avoid being born. In old age the intellect becomes dull and the memory is lost and the senses become cold and weak. There is decay of power and strength. The old man is treated with contempt by his relatives. These are the evils of old age. A sick man who suffers from piles, suffers from weakness and anaemia through loss of blood. A man suffering from malaria gets an enlarged spleen. These are the evils caused by sickness.

Pain: The three types of pain or afflictions are referred to in the 'Introduction'.

Pain itself is evil. Birth is painful. Birth is misery. Death is misery. Old age is misery. Sickness is misery. Birth, death, etc., are all miseries, because they produce misery or pain.

By such reflection and perception of the evil in these arises indifference to the pleasures of the body and the sensual pleasures. Then the mind turns within towards the innermost Self to attain knowledge of the Self. As the perception of the evil of pain in birth helps to obtain knowledge of the Self, it is spoken of as knowledge.

असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥९॥

असक्तिः non-attachment, अनभिष्वङ्गः non-identification of the Self, पुत्रदारगृहादिषु in son, wife, home and the rest, नित्यम् constant, च and, समचित्तत्वम् even-mindedness, इष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable.

9. Non-attachment, non-identification of the Self with son, wife, home and the rest, and constant even-mindedness on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable,

Commentary: When a man thinks, "This object is mine", the idea of "mine-ness" enters his mind. He develops Abhimana (false identification). Then he begins to love the objects. He clings to them and gets attached to them. *Asakti* is non-attachment to objects. There is absence of liking for the objects.

Anabhishvangah: There is intense attachment to wife, son or mother, etc. There is complete identification of the Self with another. He feels happy or miserable when that person is happy or miserable. Govindan feels miserable when his wife is dead because he was very much attached to her but he does not feel anything when his neighbour's wife is dead. A man of wisdom has no attachment to his home. He considers his home as a public inn on the side of a public road.

And the rest: Others who are very dear: relatives or other dependants.

Constant even-mindedness or equanimity is an index of knowledge. The man of wisdom is neither elated when he gets the desirable or pleasant objects, nor grieves when he attains the undesirable or painful objects.

Non-attachment, absence of affection and equanimity are all conducive to the attainment of knowledge of the Self. They are designated as knowledge because they are the means of attaining knowledge.

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ।।१०।।

मयि in Me, च and, अनन्ययोगेन by the Yoga of non-separation, भक्तिः devotion, अव्यभिचारिणी unswerving, विविक्तदेशसेवित्वम् resort to solitary places, अरतिः distaste, जनसंसदि in the society of men.

10. Unswerving devotion unto Me by the Yoga of non-separation, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of men,

Commentary: The man of wisdom is firmly convinced that there is nothing higher than Me and that I am the sole refuge. He has unflinching devotion to Me through Yoga without any thought for other objects. His mind has merged or entered into

Me. Just as a river, when it merges itself in the ocean becomes completely one with it, even so he, being united with Me, worships only Me. This is Ananya Yoga or Aprithak Samadhi (Yoga of non-separation or the superconscious state in which the devotee feels that he is non-distinct from God). Such devotion is a means of attaining knowledge. Such a devotee will never give up his devotion and worship even when he is under great trials and adversities.

Viviktadesasevitvam: He lives on the banks of sacred rivers, in caves, in the mountains, on the shores of seas or lakes and in beautiful solitary gardens where there is no fear of serpents, tigers or thieves. In solitary places the mind is quite calm. There are no disturbing elements that can distract one's attention. You can have uninterrupted meditation on the Self and can enter into Samadhi quickly.

Society of men: Distaste for the society of worldly-minded people, not of the wise, pure and holy. Satsanga or association with the wise is a means to the attainment of the knowledge of the Self.

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोन्यथा ॥११॥

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वम् constancy in Self-knowledge, तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् perception of the end of true knowledge, एतत् this, ज्ञानम् knowledge, इति thus, प्रोक्तम् declared, अज्ञानम् ignorance, यत् which, अतः from it, अन्यथा opposed.

11. Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of true knowledge—this is declared to be knowledge, and what is opposed to it is ignorance.

Commentary: The liberated sage has constant awareness of the Self. He knows that knowledge of the Self alone is permanent and all other learning relating to this world is ignorance. He knows that the knowledge which leads to the realisation of the Self is the only truth.

These attributes beginning with "humility" are declared to be knowledge, because they are conducive to knowledge: they are the means to knowledge. They are secondary or auxiliary causes of knowledge. The fruit of this knowledge of the Self is deliverance from the round of births and deaths. The spiritual aspirant should always keep the end of knowledge in view. Only then will he attempt to develop the various virtues which are conducive to the attainment of knowledge of the Self. What is opposed to knowledge, viz., lust, anger, greed, pride, hypocrisy, attachment, cunningness, diplomacy, injuring others, is ignorance. These evil traits which are the products of ignorance bind a man to Samsara. If you wish to attain the knowledge of the Self you will have to eradicate these evil traits which stand as stumbling blocks on the path of salvation. If you cultivate the opposite virtues, the evil traits will die by themselves just as the plants which are deprived of water in a garden die by themselves. It is difficult to eradicate the evil traits by fighting against them.

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।
अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ।।१२।।

ज्ञेयम् has to be known, यत् which, तत् that, प्रवक्ष्यामि (I) will declare, यत् which, ज्ञात्वा knowing, अमृतम् immortality, अश्नुते (one) attains to, अनादिमत् the beginningless, परम् supreme, ब्रह्म Brahman, न not, सत् being, तत् that, न not, असत् non-being, उच्यते is called.

12. I will declare that which has to be known, knowing which one attains to immortality, the beginningless supreme Brahman, called neither being nor non-being.

Commentary: The Lord praises that which ought to be known (Para Brahman) in order to create in Arjuna (or any hearer) an intense desire to know It.

Brahman cannot be expressed in words like "being" or "non-being", because Brahman does not belong to any class or genus like a Brahmana, cow or horse. It has no quality like whiteness, blackness, etc. It has no relation or connection with anything else, because It is one without a second. It is no object of any sense. It is beyond the reach of the mind and the senses. It is actionless. It is the great transcendental and unmanifested Absolute. It is always the witnessing subject in all objects.

The Vedas emphatically declare that Brahman is without attributes, activity, attachment or parts.

In chapter IX. 19 it was stated that He is the being and also the non-being. It is now stated that He is neither being nor non-being. This would seem to the readers to be a contradiction in terms; but it is not so. Though the manifest (perishable) and the unmanifest (imperishable) universe are both forms of Brahman, He is beyond both these. (*Cf.* VII. 2; XV. 16, 17 and 18)

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥१३॥

सर्वतः everywhere, पाणिपादम् with hands and feet, तत् that, सर्वतः everywhere, अक्षिशिरोमुखम् with eyes, heads and mouths, सर्वतः everywhere, श्रुतिमत् with ears, लोके in the world, सर्वम् all, आवृत्य having enveloped, तिष्ठति exists.

13. With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere, He exists in the worlds enveloping all.

Commentary: He (the knower of the field or Para Brahman) pervades everything in this world. He fills and surrounds this world with Himself. He abides in the universe enveloping everything.

In the previous verse it is said that the Brahman Which is to be known is neither being nor non-being. One may think that It is non-entity or void or nothing. In order to remove this misapprehension, the Lord says in this verse that the knowable has hands and feet everywhere, etc. It directs the mind and the senses to do their proper functions. This is only the manifest aspect of Saguna Brahman (Brahman with attributes).

Just as the engine-driver drives the engine, so also the knowable or the knower of the field drives the body-engine. It is the Inner Ruler. It is the innermost Self. It is the support, substratum or basis for this world, body, mind, life-force and the senses. The existence of Brahman is determined or ascertained or indicated by the existence of the limiting adjuncts, viz., body, mind and senses, because there must be self-consciousness behind their activities. How can you call It non-existence then?

Just as the rope is not affected by the qualities or the defects of the illusory superimposed snake, so also Para Brahman (the knower of the field) is not affected by the superimposed world, body, senses, mind and the life-force. There is only one common consciousness in all beings or bodies. That common consciousness is eternal, self-luminous and all-pervading. That common consciousness is Para Brahman. The body, mind, senses and the life-force are by nature insentient. But they are moved by Brahman to action. They act on account of the mere presence of Brahman or the knower of the field. (The limiting adjuncts are illusory.) Hence they put on the semblance of consciousness, just as the iron piece puts on the semblance of a magnet when it is in the presence of a magnet.

The whole world is superimposed on Brahman like the snake on the rope. This is called Adhyaropa. It is sublated by the method (Yukti) of Apavada (negation or denial).

This verse is taken from the Svetasvataropanishad 3. 16.

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।
असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥१४॥

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासम् shining by the functions of all senses, सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् (yet) without the senses, असक्तम् unattached, सर्वभृत् (yet) supporting all, च and, एव even, निर्गुणम् devoid of qualities, गुणभोक्तृ (yet) experiencer of the qualities, च and.

14. Shining by the functions of all the senses, yet without the senses; unattached, yet supporting all; devoid of qualities, yet their experiencer,

Commentary: Brahman sees without eyes, hears without ears, smells without nose, eats without mouth, feels without skin, grasps without hands, walks without feet. "He is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker. Other than Him there is no seer, no hearer, no thinker. ~~He is the Self, the~~ Inner Ruler, the Immortal." (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad III. 7. 23) He is free from the qualities of Nature and yet He is the enjoyer of the qualities.

All the senses: The five organs of knowledge and the five organs of action, the inner senses, mind and intellect come under the term *all the senses.* The organs of action and those of knowledge perform their functions in conjunction with the mind and the intellect. They cannot function independently. Therefore, the mind and the intellect are included in the term *all the senses.*

Brahman is transcendental and unmanifest, but It manifests Itself through the limiting adjuncts of the external and the internal senses. As It is destitute of the senses It is unattached and yet It supports all. It is the support or substratum of everything. It is destitute of the qualities of Nature and yet It is the enjoyer of those qualities. Brahman is really mysterious.

This verse is taken from the Svetasvataropanishad 3. 17.

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ।।१५।।

बहिः without, अन्तः within, च and, भूतानाम् of (all) beings, अचरम् the unmoving, चरम् the moving, एव also, च and, सूक्ष्मत्वात् because of Its subtlety, तत् That, अविज्ञेयम् unknowable, दूरस्थम् is far, च and, अन्तिके near, च and, तत् That.

15. Without and within (all) beings the unmoving and also the moving; because of Its subtlety, unknowable; and near and far away is That.

Commentary: Brahman is subtle like the ether. It is incomprehensible to the unillumined on account of Its extreme subtlety. It is unknowable to the man who is not endowed with the four means of salvation *(see page 58).*

Brahman is known or realised by the wise. It is realised by the first class aspirant who is equipped with these means. It is near to the wise man or the illumined because It is his very Self. It is very far to the ignorant man who is drowned in worldliness or sensual pleasures. It is not attainable by the ignorant or unenlightened even in millions of years.

Near and far away: This expression is found in the Isavasya Upanishad (5) and the Mundaka Upanishad (3. 17).

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥१६॥

अविभक्तम् undivided, च and, भूतेषु in beings, विभक्तम् divided, इव as if, च and, स्थितम् existing, भूतभर्तृ the supporter of beings, च and, तत् That ज्ञेयम् to be known, ग्रसिष्णु devouring, प्रभविष्णु generating, च and.

16. And undivided, yet It exists as if divided in beings; It is to be known as the supporter of beings; It devours and It generates.

Commentary: Brahman must be regarded as That which supports, swallows up and also creates all beings, in the three forms of Brahma who creates the world of names and forms, Vishnu who preserves or sustains, and Rudra who destroys. It is undivided in the various bodies. It is like ether. It is all-pervading like space (Akasa). It is indivisible and the One, but It seems to divide Itself in forms and appears as all the separate existing things and beings. It is essentially unbroken. Yet, It is, as it were, divided among all beings.

It devours this world during the cosmic dissolution. It generates it at the time of the origin of the next age. It supports all beings during the period of sustenance of this world.

Just as fire is hidden in the wood, so also Brahman is hidden in all bodies. Just as the one space appears to be different through the limiting adjuncts (pot, house, etc.) so also the one indivisible Brahman appears to be different through the limiting adjuncts (the body, etc.). (*Cf.* XVIII. 20)

An objector says: "The knowable Brahman, the Knower of the field, is all-pervading. It exists everywhere and yet It is not perceived. Therefore It must be of the nature of darkness or Tamas."

The answer is: "No. It cannot be."

"What, then?" "It is the Light of lights."

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥१७॥

ज्योतिषाम् of lights, अपि even, तत् That, ज्योतिः Light, तमसः from darkness, परम् beyond, उच्यते is said (to be), ज्ञानम् knowledge, ज्ञेयम् that which is to be known, ज्ञानगम्यम् attainable by knowledge, हृदि in the heart, सर्वस्य of all, विष्ठितम् seated.

17. That, the Light of all lights, is said to be beyond darkness: knowledge, the knowable and the goal of knowledge, seated in the hearts of all.

Commentary: The Supreme Self illumines the intellect, the mind, the sun, moon, stars, fire and lightning. It is self-luminous. "The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor do these lightnings shine and much less this fire. When It shines, everything shines after It; all these shine by Its Light." *(Kathopanishad* 5. 15; also *Svetasvataropanishad* 6. 14)

Knowledge: Such as humility. *(Cf.* XIII. 7 to 11)

The knowable: As described in verses 12 to 17.

The goal of knowledge, i.e., capable of being understood by wisdom.

These three are installed in the heart (Buddhi) of every living being. Though the light of the sun shines in all objects, yet the sun's light shines more brilliantly in all bright and clean objects such as a mirror. Even so, though Brahman is present in all objects, the intellect shines with special effulgence received from Brahman. (*Cf.* X. 20; XIII. 3; XVIII. 61)

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।
मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥१८॥

इति thus, क्षेत्रम् the field, तथा as well as, ज्ञानम् knowledge, ज्ञेयम् the knowable, च and, उक्तम् have been stated, समासतः briefly, मद्भक्तः My devotee, एतत् this, विज्ञाय knowing, मद्भावाय to My being, उपपद्यते enters.

18. Thus the field, as well as knowledge and the knowable have been briefly stated. My devotee, knowing this, enters into My Being.

Commentary: He who has controlled his mind and organs, who has the knowledge of the field and the knowable, and who fixes his mind on Me becomes one with Me.

Thus the field described above (beginning with the 'great elements' and ending with 'firmness', verses 5 and 6), knowledge described above (beginning with 'humility' and ending with 'perception of the end of true knowledge' in verses 7 to 11) and the knowable described in verses 12 to 17—these have briefly been stated.

He who has single-minded devotion unto Me, who takes Me (Vaasudeva, the Supreme Lord, the omniscient, and the supreme Guru) as the Self of everything, he who thinks and feels that all that he sees, hears and touches is nothing but the Lord and he who has the right knowledge described above enters into My Being or attains release from birth and death.

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ।।१९।।

प्रकृतिम् matter, पुरुषम् spirit, च and, एव even, विद्धि know, अनादी beginningless, उभौ both, अपि also, विकारान् modifications, च and, गुणान् qualities, च and, एव even, विद्धि know, प्रकृतिसंभवान् born of Prakriti.

19. Know thou that Nature (matter) and the Spirit are both beginningless; and know also that all modifications and qualities are born of Nature.

Commentary: Steps are necessary to reach the top floor of a building. Even so, steps are necessary to reach the summit of the knowledge of the Self. That is the reason why Lord Krishna took Arjuna to the summit of knowledge step by step. He first taught Arjuna the nature of the field, then knowledge, ignorance or non-wisdom, and ultimately the knowable. When a child is to be fed the intelligent mother divides the food into small portions and feeds the child little by little. Even so Lord Krishna fed His spiritual child Arjuna with the spiritual food little by little.

Lord Krishna says: "O Arjuna! I will give you the same teaching in another form by the description of the Spirit and Nature."

Till now the Lord expounded the knowledge of the field and the Self in accordance with the philosophy of the Upanishads. Now He explains the same knowledge in accordance with the Sankhya philosophy, but without accepting its dual nature in the form of discrimination between the Spirit and Nature.

Vikaras: Modifications from the Mahat-Tattva or intellect down to the physical body; the twenty-four principles of the Sankhyas. The Self within is changeless. All changes take place in Nature. Mulaprakriti (the Primordial Nature, the Unmanifested) becomes modified into Mahat, egoism, mind, the great elements and other minor modifications.

Just as coolness and ice, the day and the night, are inseparable, so also matter and Spirit are inseparable. The three qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are born of Nature (matter). All actions proceed from the mind, the life-force, the senses and the physical body.

According to the Sankhya philosophy, Prakriti and Purusha are not only eternal and beginningless but also independent of each other and self-created. According to Vedanta philosophy, Prakriti or Maya originates from Brahman and is, therefore, neither self-created nor independent. Isvara has Maya under His perfect control. Maya is His causal body. Maya is His illusory power.

Matter and Spirit are the Natures of Isvara. Know that these two are beginningless. That which has no beginning is *Anadi.* As Isvara is eternal, His two Natures also should be eternal. (This is according to the Sankhyas.)

Isvara possesses these two Natures (superior and inferior) by which He causes the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. Therefore He has the Lordship and rules over the universe. The two Natures have no beginning. Therefore they are the cause of Samsara.

The inferior Nature (Apara Prakriti) which consists of the eightfold division of Nature referred to in chapter VII, verse 4, is the Prakriti of chapter XIII, verse 19. The superior Nature (Para Prakriti) referred to in chapter VII, verse 5, is the Purusha of chapter XIII, verse 19. Purusha here means 'Jiva' (the individual soul).

Even a child smiles and experiences exhilaration, grief, fear, anger, pleasure and pain. Who taught it? The impressions of the virtuous and vicious actions of this birth cannot be the cause of these. The impressions of the previous birth alone are the cause of all these. They (the impressions) must have a support. From this we can clearly infer the existence of the individual soul in the previous birth and that the individual soul is beginningless. If you do not accept that the individual soul is beginningless, the two defects of Kritanasa (non-fruition of actions performed) and Akritabhyagama (causeless effect) will creep in. Pleasure and pain which are the fruits of virtuous and vicious actions done previously will pass away without being experienced. This is the defect of Kritanasa. So also, one will have to enjoy pleasure and pain, the fruits of good and bad actions which were not done by him previously. This is the defect of Akritabhyagama. In order to get rid of these two defects we will have to accept that the individual soul is beginningless. The scriptures also emphatically declare that the soul is beginningless.

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥२०॥

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे in the production of the effect, and the cause, हेतुः the cause, प्रकृतिः Prakriti, उच्यते is said (to be), पुरुषः Purusha, सुखदुःखानाम् of pleasure and pain, भोक्तृत्वे in the experience, हेतुः the cause, उच्यते is said (to be).

20. In the production of the effect and the cause, Nature (matter) is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, the soul is said to be the cause.

Commentary: Pleasure and pain are the fruits of virtuous and vicious actions. The force of desire acts on the mind and the mind impels the senses to act to get the objects of desire. Good and evil actions proceed from Nature and lead to happiness or misery. Evil actions produce misery and sorrow. Virtuous actions cause happiness and joy. The soul is the enjoyer. The wife works and prepares nice, palatable dishes; the husband silently enjoys the fruits of her labour. He sits quietly and eats them to his heart's content. Even so Nature works and the soul experiences the fruits of Her labour, viz., pleasure and pain.

When harmony predominates, virtuous actions are performed. When there is a preponderance of Rajas, both virtuous and vicious actions are performed. When Tamas predominates, sinful, unlawful and unrighteous actions are done.

In the place of *Kaarana* (कारण) which means 'cause', some read *Karana* (करण) which means 'instrument' such as the five organs of knowledge, five organs of action, mind, intellect and egoism (thirteen principles located in the body).

Karya: The effect, viz., the physical body. The five elements which form the body and the five senses, and which form the sense-objects which are born of Nature come under the term 'effect'. All qualities, such as pleasure and pain and delusion which are born of Nature, come under the term 'instruments' because these qualities reside in the instruments, the senses.

In the production of the body, the senses and their sensations Nature is said to be the cause. Thus Nature is the cause of Samsara.

Sugarcane is the cause. Sugarcane juice, sugar and sugarcandy are the effects or modifications of sugarcane. Milk is the cause. Curd, butter and *ghee* (melted butter) are the modifications of milk. Whatever is a modification of something is its effect, and that from which the modifications come is their cause. Nature is the source or cause of all modifications. She generates everything. The ten organs, mind and the five objects of the senses are the sixteen modifications or effects.

Mahat (intellect) is born of Mulaprakriti. From Mahat Ahamkara (egoism) is born. Mahat is the effect of Mulaprakriti and the cause of Ahamkara. Therefore Mahat is called Prakriti-Vikriti. Mahat, Ahamkara and the five Tanmatras (root-elements of matter) are the seven Prakriti-Vikritis. Each of these is a modification of its predecessor and is in turn the cause of its successor. The five root-elements generate the five gross elements. They are the subtle elements. These seven are both

Nature and modification (Prakriti and Vikriti), cause and effect, and are included under the term 'cause'.

The functions of the body, senses, life-force, mind and intellect are superimposed on the pure Self. So the ignorant man says: "I am black; I am fat; I am hungry; I am angry; I am deaf; I am blind; I am the son of so and so; I know; I am the doer; I am the enjoyer, etc."

The intellect is very subtle. It is in close contact with the most subtle Self. The Consciousness of the Self is reflected in the intellect (Chidabhasa) and so the intellect which has the semblance of the Consciousness feels: "I am pure consciousness or Chaitanya. I experience pleasure and pain." The attributes of the pure Self are superimposed on the intellect. There is mutual superimposition between the intellect and the Self, Nature and Spirit. This is the cause of Samsara.

Purusha, Jiva, Kshetrajna and Bhokta are all synonymous terms. Purusha here referred to is not the Supreme Self. He is the conditioned soul, the soul subject to transmigration who experiences pleasure and pain. The Self or the Absolute is ever free from Samsara and is unchanging.

Prakriti and Purusha are the cause of Samsara. Nature generates the body, life-force, mind, intellect and the senses. The soul experiences pleasure and pain. Samsara is the experience of pleasure and pain. The soul is the Samsarin. He is the experiencer of pleasure and pain. (*Cf.* XV. 9)

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥२१॥

पुरुषः Purusha, प्रकृतिस्थः seated in Prakriti, हि indeed, भुङ्क्ते enjoys, प्रकृतिजान् born of Prakriti, गुणान् qualities, कारणम् the cause, गुणसङ्गः attachment to the Gunas, अस्य of his, सदसद्योनिजन्मसु of birth in good and evil wombs.

21. The soul seated in Nature experiences the qualities born of Nature; attachment to the qualities is the cause of its birth in good and evil wombs.

Commentary: The soul residing in Nature and identifying itself with the body and the senses which are modifications of

Nature acts through the qualities of Nature and experiences pleasure and pain and delusion. It thinks, "I am happy, I am miserable, I am deluded, I am wise." When it thus identifies itself with the qualities, it assumes individuality and takes birth in pure and impure wombs.

The soul (Jivatma) enjoys the sensual objects in conjunction with the body, mind and the senses and thus becomes the *enjoyer.* Brahman is the silent witness and non-enjoyer. The soul's attachment to the qualities of pleasure, pain and delusion is the chief cause of its birth. If you add the word *Samsara* to the second half of the verse, it will mean: "Attachment to the qualities is the cause of Samsara through births in good and evil wombs."

Good wombs (*Sat Yoni*) are those of the gods and the like; evil wombs (*Asat Yoni*) are those of lower animals. The human womb is partly good and partly evil on account of mixed Karmas.

Purushah prakritisthah: Purusha (the soul) seated in Prakriti (Nature). This is Avidya (ignorance). Attachment to the qualities of Nature is Kama (desire). Avidya and Kama are the cause of Samsara.

Jnana (wisdom) and Vairagya (dispassion) will destroy ignorance and desire. (*Cf.* XIV. 5; XV. 7)

उपद्रष्टाऽनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥२२॥

उपद्रष्टा the spectator, अनुमन्ता the permitter, च and, भर्ता the supporter, भोक्ता the enjoyer, महेश्वरः the great Lord, परमात्मा the Supreme Self, इति thus, च and, अपि also, उक्तः is called, देहे in the body, अस्मिन् (in) this, पुरुषः Purusha, परः Supreme.

22. The Supreme Soul in this body is also called the spectator, the permitter, the supporter, the enjoyer, the great Lord and the Supreme Self.

Commentary: *Upadrashta:* A spectator, a witness, a looker-on, a by-stander, one who sits near. When the priests and the sacrificer perform the sacrificial rites, an expert who has good experience in sacrificial matters sits by their side. He does not take any part at all in the sacrifice. He sits as a silent witness. He guides them. He points out their defects and corrects them. Even so the Supreme Self does not act. It does not take any part in the activities of the body, the mind and the senses. It is entirely distinct from them. It is a silent witness of their activities. It sits near Nature and silently watches Her actions.

It may be explained in another way. The body, the eyes, the mind, the intellect and the Self are the seers. Of these the body is the most external seer; the Self is the most internal and nearest seer. Beyond the Self there is no other internal seer.

Anumanta: Permitter. The Supreme Self gives consent. It expresses Its approval or satisfaction regarding the actions done by the senses, the mind and the intellect. The King consents and says "Yes." The Prime Minister and the other officers carry out his orders. Even so the Supreme Self consents or gives permission; the body, the mind, the intellect, and the senses perform their respective functions. Or, though It Itself does not work while the senses, the mind and the intellect work, It appears to be engaged in action, It seems to cooperate with them. As It is an onlooker or mere witness, It never stands in the way of the activities of the body, the mind, the intellect and the senses.

Bharta: Supporter. Just as the husband is the supporter of his wife, so also the Self is the supporter of this body, mind, intellect, life-force and the senses. It is different from them, just as the father who supports the children is different from them.

Bhokta: Enjoyer; the Self, of the nature of eternal intelligence. Just as heat is the inherent nature of fire, so also eternal intelligence is the inherent nature of the Self. All the states of the mind such as pleasure, pain and delusion are permeated and illumined by the intelligent Self. Just as Govindan who takes the food is different from the food, so also the Self is different from the intellect, the mind and the senses.

Mahesvarah: The great Lord. As He is the soul or essence of everything and as He is independent of all, He is Mahesvara. The sky is very big. Mahesvara is bigger than even the sky, and so He is called Mahesvara. Just as the king is different from his subjects, so also the Self is different from Nature and the effects or modifications of Nature.

Paramatma: The Supreme Self. It is supreme because It is superior to all those things, from the Unmanifested to the physical body, which are mistaken for the Self on account of ignorance. Just as an iron piece moves in the presence of a magnet, so also the mind and the intellect which are insentient move and function in the presence of the Supreme Self. Just as the moon borrows its light from the sun, so also the mind and the intellect borrow their light from the Supreme Self. The Supreme Self is self-luminous. Mind and intellect have no self-luminosity. In the Vedas also He is called the Supreme Self. Lord Krishna says in verse 17 of the fifteenth chapter: "But distinct is the Highest Purusha spoken of as the Supreme Self."

"Do thou also know Me as the knower of the field in all the fields," has been described in detail and the subject is concluded in this verse.

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैःसह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥२३॥

यः who, एवम् thus, वेत्ति knows, पुरुषम् Purusha, प्रकृतिम् Prakriti, च and, गुणैः qualities, सह with, सर्वथा in all ways, वर्तमानः living, अपि also, न not, सः he, भूयः again, अभिजायते is born.

23. He who thus knows the Spirit and Matter together with the qualities, in whatever condition he may be, he is not born again.

Commentary: One who knows the Soul and Nature with its qualities, whatever his conduct may be, frees himself from the cycle of births and deaths. Such is the advantage he gains from the discriminative knowledge of Spirit and Matter. He knows that he is eternal and changeless and that all changes are due to the modifications of Nature on account of its qualities. The self through ignorance identifies itself with the body and suffers rebirth.

In whatsoever condition he may be, whether he is engaged in prescribed or forbidden acts (like Indra who killed the Purohita Visvarupa and many Sannyasins), he is not born again, because the actions (which are the seeds of rebirth), of one who knows the Spirit and Matter, who has gained the knowledge of the Self, are burnt by the fire of that knowledge. Just as the seeds that are fried in fire do not sprout again, so also the actions burnt in the fire of knowledge cannot produce new bodies or further births. In his case they are Karmabhasa (mere semblance of Karma). They are not effective causes and cannot produce further births. A burnt cloth cannot serve the purpose of the cloth.

Those actions which are done with egoism and desire (expectation of fruits) will produce fruits or results. In the case of a wise man, the seeds of evil, viz., ignorance, egoism, attachment, etc., are burnt by the fire of knowledge. Therefore he cannot have rebirths.

The Karmas (Prarabdha) which have already started their operation by producing this present birth do not perish, notwithstanding the dawn of the knowledge of the Self. When an arrow is once sent out from a bow at a mark, it pierces the mark and continues to act till it falls to the ground when the full force with which it was discharged is exhausted. Even so the Prarabdha Karma which has given rise to the body continues to act till the inherent force is fully exhausted, although the sage has attained Self-realisation through his body. But he is not in the least affected by this, because he has no identification with the body, and as he has identified himself with Brahman or the Absolute. If a carbuncle or cancer arises in the body on account of Prarabdha Karma, he will not suffer a bit as he has risen above body-consciousness, and as he stands as a witness of his body. But a by-stander or a spectator wrongly imagines that the liberated sage is also suffering like an ordinary worldly man. This is a serious and sad mistake. From the viewpoint of the liberated sage he has neither body nor Prarabdha Karma.

An arrow that is placed ready on the bow but not discharged with force can be withdrawn. Similarly, the Karmas which have not begun to generate their fruits or effects can be neutralised or destroyed by the knowledge of the Self. Therefore it is proper to say that the liberated sage is not born again. He will not take another body when the body through which he attained knowledge perishes. As ignorance, the cause of this body, is destroyed by the knowledge of the Self, birth, the effect of ignorance, is also destroyed. As one takes birth through virtuous and vicious actions, a sage will not take birth as his virtuous and vicious actions (the whole Sanchita or accumulated Karmas of his previous births) are destroyed by the knowledge of the Self. The Karmas done by him after he has attained Self-realisation cannot touch him at all as he has neither egoism (agency) nor desires. (*Cf.* XIII. 32)

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥२४॥

ध्यानेन by meditation, आत्मनि in the self, पश्यन्ति behold, केचित् some, आत्मानम् the Self, आत्मना by the self, अन्ये others, सांख्येन योगेन by the Yoga of knowledge (by the Sankhya Yoga), कर्मयोगेन by Karma Yoga, च and, अपरे others.

24. Some by meditation behold the Self in the self by the self, others by the Yoga of knowledge, and still others by the Yoga of action.

Commentary: There are several paths to reach the knowledge of the Self according to the nature or temperament and capacity of the individual. The first path is the Yoga of meditation taught by Maharshi Patanjali. The Raja Yogins behold the Supreme Self in the self (Buddhi) by the self (purified mind). Meditation is a continuous and unbroken flow of thought of the Self like the flow of oil from one vessel to another. Through concentration hearing and the other senses are withdrawn into the mind. The senses are not allowed to run towards their respective sensual objects. They are kept under proper check and control through the process of abstraction. Then the mind itself is made to abide in the Self through constant meditation on the Self. The mind is refined or purified by meditation. The mind that is rendered pure will naturally move towards the Self. It is not attracted by nor is it attached to the sensual objects.

Sankhya Yoga is Jnana Yoga. The aspirant does Vichara (analysis, reflection) and separates himself from the three qualities of Nature, the three bodies and the five sheaths and identifies himself with the witness (Self). He thinks and feels, "I am distinct from the three qualities. I am the silent witness. I am unattached. I am non-doer. I am non-enjoyer. I am immortal, eternal, self-existent, self-luminous, indivisible, unborn and unchanging."

The Karma Yogi surrenders his actions and their fruits to the Lord. He has Isvararpana Buddhi (intelligence that offers everything to God). This produces purity of mind which gives rise to knowledge of the Self. Karma Yoga brings about concentration of the mind through the purification of the mind. It leads to Yoga through the purification of the mind and so it is spoken of as Yoga itself.

Those who practise Sankhya Yoga are the highest class of spiritual aspirants. Those who practise the Yoga of meditation are aspirants of the middling class. Those who practise Karma Yoga are the lowest class of spiritual aspirants. The aspirants of the middling and lowest class soon become aspirants of the highest class through rigorous Sadhana or spiritual practices. (*Cf.* V. 5; VI. 46)

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वाऽन्येभ्य उपासते ।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥२५॥

अन्ये others, तु indeed, एवम् thus, अजानन्तः not knowing, श्रुत्वा having heard, अन्येभ्यः from others, उपासते worship, ते they, अपि also, च and, अतितरन्ति cross beyond, एव even, मृत्युम् death, श्रुतिपरायणाः regarding what they have heard as the Supreme refuge.

25. Others also, not knowing thus, worship, having heard of It from others; they, too, cross beyond death, regarding what they have heard as the Supreme refuge.

Commentary: The three paths, viz., the Yoga of meditation, the Yoga of knowledge, and the Yoga of action to attain the knowledge of the Self were described in the previous verse. In this verse the Yoga of worship is described.

Some who are ignorant of the methods described in the previous verse listen to the teachings of the spiritual preceptors regarding this great Truth or the Self with intense and unshakable faith, solely depending upon the authority of others' instructions, and through constant remembrance and contemplation of them attain immortality. They are devoted to their preceptor. Some study the books written by realised seers, stick with great faith to the teachings contained therein and live according to them. They also overcome death. Whichever path one follows, one eventually attains the knowledge of the Self and final liberation from birth and death,—salvation (Moksha). There are several paths to suit aspirants of different temperaments and equipments.

Freeing oneself from ignorance with its effects through the knowledge of the Self, is crossing the Samsara or attaining immortality or overcoming death or obtaining release or salvation.

यावत्सञ्जायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥२६॥

यावत् whatever, सञ्जायते is born, किञ्चित् any, सत्त्वम् being, स्थावरजङ्गमम् the unmoving and the moving, क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात् from the union between the field and the knower of the field, तत् that, विद्धि know, भरतर्षभ O best of the Bharatas.

26. Wherever a being is born, whether unmoving or moving, know thou, O best of the Bharatas (Arjuna), that it is from the union between the field and its knower.

Commentary: O Arjuna, remember that whatever is born, unmoving or moving, know thou that to be due to the union between the body and the Self.

The knower of the field is like the ether without parts. Therefore, there cannot be a union of the field and the knower of the field through contact of each other's parts like the contact of the drum and the stick or a rope and a vessel. There cannot be the inseparable connection between them like the connection that exists between the head and the neck, or the arm and the shoulder, because the field and its knower are not related to each other as cause and effect.

Then, what sort of union is there between the field and its knower? It is of the nature of mutual superimposition or illusion.

This consists in confounding the one with the other as well as their attributes, like the union of a rope with a snake, and mother-of-pearl with silver, on account of lack of discrimination of their real nature. The attributes of the Self are transferred to the body and *vice versa.* The insentient body is mistaken for the sentient Self. The activities of the body or Nature are transferred to the silent, actionless Self. This sort of illusion or superimposition will disappear when one attains knowledge of the Self, when he knows the distinction between the field and its knower, when he is able to separate the field from the knower like the reed from the *Munja* grass, when he realises that Brahman which is free from all limiting adjuncts is his own immortal Self, and that the field is a mere appearance like the snake in the rope, silver in mother-of-pearl, an imaginary city in the sky, and is like an object seen in a dream or like the horses, places and forests projected by a juggler. A sage who has the knowledge of the Self is not born again.

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ।।२७।।

समम् equally, सर्वेषु (in) all, भूतेषु in beings, तिष्ठन्तम् existing, परमेश्वरम् the Supreme Lord, विनश्यत्सु among the perishing, अविनश्यन्तम् the unperishing, यः who, पश्यति sees, सः he, पश्यति sees.

27. He sees, who sees the Supreme Lord, existing equally in all beings, the unperishing within the perishing.

Commentary: He who beholds the Supreme Lord through the inner eye of wisdom, Him Who is seated in all beings from the Creator down to the unmoving objects and Who is not destroyed even when all beings are destroyed, he is said to have realised the Self.

In different kinds of fire, the heat is the same. Gold is the same in different forms of ornaments. The light from many lamps is the same. So also in all living beings, the soul is the same. The soul or the Self is uniform everywhere. The Self is the same in ants, elephants, kings, beggars, saints and rogues.

The Self is indestructible; all living beings are perishable. It is the Supreme Lord when compared to the body, senses, mind, intellect, the Unmanifested Nature and the individual soul.

Birth is the root cause of the Bhava-Vikaras or the modifications, viz., change, growth, decay and death. The other changes of state manifest themselves after the birth of the body.

The Supreme Lord is one and changeless as He is birthless, decayless and deathless. He is the one common consciousness in all beings. He sees rightly who sees the Supreme Lord as now described. He is a Jivanmukta. He has knowledge of the knower of the field or the immortal Self. He is the real seer or a liberated sage.

The sage alone sees properly on account of knowledge. The whole world sees erroneously on account of ignorance. He who is suffering from defective vision beholds many moons. He sees erroneously. But he who sees one moon only sees in the proper manner, correctly. Even so he who beholds the one immortal indivisible Self in all beings really sees the Truth. He alone sees. He who sees many distinct selves erroneously does not really see though he sees. He is like the man who beholds many moons. (*Cf.* VIII. 20)

समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२८॥

समम् equally, पश्यन् seeing, हि indeed, सर्वत्र everywhere, समवस्थितम् equally dwelling, ईश्वरम् the Lord, न not, हिनस्ति destroys, आत्मना by the self, आत्मानम् the Self, ततः then, याति goes, पराम् the highest, गतिम् the goal.

28. Because he who sees the same Lord equally dwelling everywhere does not destroy the Self by the self; he goes to the highest goal.

Commentary: This is the vision of a liberated sage. The Supreme Self abides in all forms. There is nothing apart from It.

An ignorant man destroys the Self by identifying himself with the body and the modifications of the mind and by not seeing the one Self in all beings. He has a blurred vision. His mind is very gross. He cannot think of the subtle Self. He is swayed by the force of ignorance. He mistakes the impure body for the pure Self. He has false knowledge. But the sage has knowledge of the Self or true knowledge and so he beholds the one Self in all beings. An ignorant man is the slayer of his Self. He destroys this body and takes another body and so on. But he who beholds the one Self in all beings does not destroy the Self by the self. Therefore he attains the Supreme Goal, i.e., he attains release from the round of birth and death. Knowledge of the Self leads to liberation or salvation. Knowledge of the Absolute annihilates the ignorance *in toto*. If the ignorance is destroyed and false knowledge is also destroyed, all evils are simultaneously destroyed.

Those who have realised that unity of the Self in all these diverse forms are never caught in the meshes of birth and death. They attain the state of Turiya (the fourth state beyond waking, dreaming and deep sleep) where form and sound do not exist.

The self is everybody's friend and also his enemy as well. The idea first expressed in chapter VI, verses 5 and 6 is repeated here. (*Cf.* XVIII. 20)

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथाऽऽत्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥२९॥

प्रकृत्या by Nature, एव alone, च and, कर्माणि actions, क्रियमाणानि being performed, सर्वशः all, यः who, पश्यति sees, तथा so also, आत्मानम् the Self, अकर्तारम् actionless, सः he, पश्यति sees.

29. He sees, who sees that all actions are performed by Nature alone and that the Self is actionless.

Commentary: Nature is responsible for all activities. The Self is beyond all action. It is the silent witness only. He who experiences thus is the real seer or sage.

He who knows that all actions proceeding from the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, the mind and the intellect are prompted by Nature and that the Self is actionless, really sees. He alone sees. He who identifies himself with the body, the mind and the senses and foolishly thinks that the Self is the actor is an ignorant man. He sees only with the physical eyes. He has no inner eye of intuition. The sky remains motionless but the clouds move across the sky. Even so the Self is actionless; but Nature does everything. The Self is destitute of any limiting adjunct. Just as there is no variety in ether, so also there is no variety in the Self. It is one homogeneous essence. It is free from any kind of characteristics. (*Cf.* III. 27; XIV. 19; XVIII. 16)

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा ॥३०॥

यदा when, भूतपृथग्भावम् the whole variety of beings, एकस्थम् resting in the One, अनुपश्यति sees, ततः from that, एव alone, च and, विस्तारम् the spreading, ब्रह्म Brahman, सम्पद्यते (he) becomes, तदा then.

30. When a man sees the whole variety of beings as resting in the One, and spreading forth from That alone, he then becomes Brahman.

Commentary: A man attains to unity with the Supreme when he knows or realises through intuition that all these manifold forms are rooted in the One. As waves in water, atoms in the earth, rays in the sun, organs in the body, emotions in the mind, sparks in the fire, so verily are all forms rooted in the One. Wherever he turns his gaze he beholds only the one Self and enjoys the bliss of the Self.

When he beholds the diversity of beings rooted in the One in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures and the preceptor, he realises through intuitive experience that all that he beholds is nothing but the Self and that the origin and the evolution of all is from That One alone. Compare with the Chhandogya Upanishad, 7. 26. 1.

आत्मतः प्राण आत्मत आशा आत्मतः स्मर
आत्मत आकाश आत्मतस्तेज आत्मत आपः
आत्मत आविर्भावतिरोभावावात्मतोऽन्नम् ॥

Atmatah prana atmata asa atmatah smara
Atmata akasa atmatasteja atmata apah
Atmata avirbhavatirobhavavatmatonnam.

"From the Self is life; from the Self is desire; from the Self is love; from the Self is ether; from the Self is light; from the

Self are the waters; from the Self is appearance and disappearance; from the Self is food."

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ।।३१।।

अनादित्वात् being without beginning, निर्गुणत्वात् being devoid of qualities, परमात्मा the Supreme Self, अयम् this, अव्ययः imperishable, शरीरस्थः dwelling in this body, अपि though, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti (Arjuna), न not, करोति acts, न not, लिप्यते is tainted.

31. Being without beginning and being devoid of (any) qualities, the Supreme Self, imperishable, though dwelling in the body, O Arjuna, neither acts nor is tainted.

Commentary: The Supreme Self is beyond Nature. Therefore It is without qualities. It is *Nirguna*. The activity in Nature is really due to its own qualities which inhere in it. The Supreme Self existed before the body came into being and will continue to be after its dissolution. It is eternally the same and imperishable.

Avyaya: That which is free from the changes of birth and death or appearance and destruction. That which has a beginning has birth. After the object is born it is subject to the changes of being (growth, decay, etc.). As the Self is birthless, It is free from the changes of state (existence, birth, growth, change, decay and death). As the Self is free from all sorts of functions, It is Avyaya. Even if the reflection of the sun in the water moves, the sun does not move a bit. Even so the Supreme Self is not touched by the fruits of action as It is not the doer, as It is without the qualities of Nature, or limbs, indivisible, devoid of parts, without action, beginningless and unattached and causeless.

This Supreme Self is free from the three kinds of differences, viz., Sajatiyabheda, Vijatiyabheda and Svagatabheda. A mango tree is different from a fig tree. This is Sajatiyabheda. A mango tree is different from a stone. This is Vijatiyabheda. In the same mango tree there is difference between leaves, flowers and fruits. This is Svagatabheda. But the Supreme Self is one without a second. There is no other

Brahman Which is equal to It. Therefore, there cannot be Sajatiyabheda in Brahman. This world is a mere appearance. It is a mere figment of our imagination. It is superimposed on the Absolute on account of ignorance. An imaginary object has no independent existence apart from its substratum, just as the snake in the rope has no independent existence apart from its substratum, the rope. Therefore, there cannot be Vijatiyabheda in Brahman. Brahman is indivisible, partless, without qualities, without form and without any limbs. Therefore there cannot be Svagatabheda in Brahman.

Brahman or the Supreme Self is beginningless. It is without a cause. It is self-existent. It is without parts. It is without qualities. Therefore Brahman is imperishable. As It is unattached, It is neither the doer nor the enjoyer. If Brahman also is the doer and enjoyer, It is no longer Brahman. It is in no way better than ourselves. This cannot be. Agency and enjoyment are attributed to the ego on account of ignorance. "It is Nature that acts." (*Cf.* V. 14; XV. 9)

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ।।३२।।

यथा as, सर्वगतम् the all-pervading, सौक्ष्म्यात् because of its subtlety, आकाशम् ether, न not, उपलिप्यते is tainted, सर्वत्र everywhere, अवस्थितः seated, देहे in the body, तथा so, आत्मा the Self, न not, उपलिप्यते is tainted.

32. As the all-pervading ether is not tainted, because of its subtlety, so the Self seated everywhere in the body is not tainted.

Commentary: Ether pervades everything. All are immersed in it. There is no point whereunto ether does not penetrate and pervade and yet it is not tainted by anything. Even so the Self pervades the whole body and the whole world. Being subtler than the body the Self is never tainted by it or anything else. It is unattached and actionless. It has no parts or limbs. So virtuous and vicious actions cannot contaminate the Self. It is ever pure and stainless.

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥३३॥

यथा as, प्रकाशयति illumines, एकः one, कृत्स्नम् the whole, लोकम् world, इमम् this, रविः sun, क्षेत्रम् the field, क्षेत्री the Lord of the field (Paramatma), तथा so, कृत्स्नम् the whole, प्रकाशयति illumines, भारत O descendant of Bharata (Arjuna).

33. Just as the one sun illumines the whole world, so also the Lord of the field (Supreme Self) illumines the whole field, O Arjuna.

Commentary: The Supreme Self is one. It illumines the whole matter from the Unmanifested down to the blade of grass or a lump of clay, from the 'great elements' down to 'firmness' or 'fortitude'. *(Cf.* verses 5 and 6.) Just as the sun is one, just as the sun illumines the whole world, just as the sun is not tainted, so also the Self is One in all bodies, It illumines all the bodies; and It is not contaminated.

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥३४॥

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोः between the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna, एवम् thus, अन्तरम् distinction, ज्ञानचक्षुषा by the eye of knowledge, भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षम् the liberation from the Prakriti of being, च and, ये who, विदुः know, यान्ति go, ते they, परम् the Supreme.

34. They who, by the eye of knowledge, perceive the distinction between the field and its knower and also the liberation from the Nature of being, go to the Supreme.

Commentary: They who know through the eye of intuition opened by meditation and the instructions of the spiritual preceptor and the scriptures, that the field is insentient, the doer, changing and finite, and that the knower of the field (the Self) is pure consciousness, the non-doer, unchanging and infinite, and who also perceive the non-existence of Nature, ignorance, the Unmanifested, the material cause of being—they attain the Supreme. Through the attainment of Self-realisation or knowledge of the Self, they are entirely liberated from the clutches or the influence of Maya (delusion) and ignorance. They do not assume any more bodies. They are not born again. They attain Kaivalya Moksha.

In accordance with the doctrine of the Sankhyas, bondage and freedom do not pertain to the Self because It is always unattached and It is the non-doer and non-enjoyer and also without limbs or parts. But on account of Its union with Nature, It assumes agency through superimposition. When ignorance is annihilated through the knowledge of the Self, Nature which is conjoined with the Self is liberated. Then She gives up Her play or dance in front of the Spirit. She has discharged all Her duties well for the sake of the enjoyment and the release (Bhoga and Apavarga) of the Purusha (Spirit). Therefore the Sankhyas declare that bondage and freedom are states of Nature only. Some interpret that the Self is emancipated from the shackles of Nature and Her modifications.

(This chapter is also known by the name Prakriti-Purusha-Vibhaga-Yoga.)

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगो नाम त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ।।

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the thirteenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Distinction Between
The Field and the Knower of the Field.

अथ चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः

FOURTEENTH DISCOURSE

गुणत्रयविभागयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE GUNAS

श्री भगवानुवाच

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥१॥

परम् supreme, भूयः again, प्रवक्ष्यामि (I) will declare, ज्ञानानाम् of all knowledge, ज्ञानम् knowledge, उत्तमम् the best, यत् which, ज्ञात्वा having known, मुनयः the sages, सर्वे all, पराम् supreme, सिद्धिम् to perfection, इतः after this life, गताः gone.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. I will again declare (to thee) that supreme knowledge, the best of all knowledge, having known which all the sages have gone to the supreme perfection after this life.

Commentary: Further analysis of the field is made in this chapter.

In chapter XIII, verse 21, it has been stated that attachment to the qualities is the cause of Samsara or births in good and evil wombs. In this chapter the Lord gives answers to the questions: "What are the qualities of Nature (Gunas)? How do they bind a man? What are the characteristics of these qualities? How do they operate? How can one obtain freedom from them? What are the characteristics of a liberated soul?"

All knowledge has no reference to the knowledge described in chapter XIII, verse 7 to 10, but it refers to that kind of knowledge which concerns sacrifices. That kind of knowledge which relates to sacrifices cannot give liberation. But the knowledge which is going to be imparted in this discourse will certainly lead to emancipation. The Lord eulogises this knowledge by the epithets 'supreme' and 'the best' in order to create great interest in Arjuna and other spiritual aspirants.

Having learnt this supreme knowledge, all the sages who practised Manana or reflection (Munis) have attained perfection after being freed from bondage to the body.

Itah: After this life; after being freed from this bondage to the body.

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥२॥

इदम् this, ज्ञानम् knowledge, उपाश्रित्य having taken refuge in, मम My, साधर्म्यम् unity, आगताः have attained to, सर्गे at the time of creation, अपि also, न not, उपजायन्ते are born, प्रलये at the time of dissolution, न not, व्यथन्ति are (they) disturbed, च and.

2. They who, having taken refuge in this knowledge, have attained to unity with Me, are neither born at the time of creation nor are they disturbed at the time of dissolution.

Commentary: Having resorted to this knowledge they (the sages) are assimilated into My own nature. They have attained to My Being. They have become identical with Me. They live in Me with no thought of "thou" or "I." They go beyond birth and death. There is no birth for them when creation begins and there is no death for them at the time of dissolution. Having reached Me they attain eternity, immortality and perfection. Having become identical with Me through the attainment of the knowledge of the Self by practising the necessary means, they are neither born at the time of creation nor are they disquieted at the time of dissolution. Knowledge of the Self is eulogised by the Lord in this verse.

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥३॥

मम My, योनिः womb, महत् the great, ब्रह्म Brahma, तस्मिन् in that, गर्भम् germ, दधामि bears, अहम् I, संभवः the birth, सर्वभूतानाम् of all beings, ततः thence, भवति is, भारत O descendant of Bharata (Arjuna).

3. My womb is the great Brahma; in that I place the germ; thence, O Arjuna, is the birth of all beings.

Commentary: My womb is the great Nature. The cosmos is evolved out of His Nature. Nature is called the great Brahma for She is the resting place of the five subtle elements and also the Mahat (cosmic mind). She is called the great Brahma, because through Her the whole manifestation takes place.

All changes arise out of this great Nature. So She has got the name Mulaprakriti or Primordial Nature or the original principle. From the point of view of the Unmanifest She is called Avyakta. The Vedantins call Her Maya (illusion). The Sankhyas call Her Prakriti.

This Prakriti is called *great* because She is greater than all Her effects. This Nature, made of the three qualities, is the material cause of all beings. As She is the source or cause of all Her modifications and also nourishes all the modifications with Her energy, She is called Brahma.

I place in it (the Mahadbrahma) the embryo of life; then all beings begin to come to life therefrom. In the great Brahma or Nature I place the germ or the seed for the birth of Hiranyagarbha; and the seed gives birth to all beings. The birth of Hiranyagarbha or Brahma (the Creator) gives rise to the birth of beings. The Primordial Nature is like the clay. She cannot create the forms Herself. She gives birth to Brahma Who creates all beings just as the potter creates various forms from the clay. I am endowed with the two Saktis, viz., the superior and the inferior Natures (*Cf.* VII. 4 and 5), the field and its knower. I unite these two (the Spirit and the matter). The individual soul comes under the influence of the limiting adjuncts, viz., ignorance, desire and action. On account of ignorance (Avidya), the individual soul forgets his original divine nature, gets himself entangled in the meshes of desire (Kama) and action (Karma), and revolves in the wheel of birth and death. The individual soul turns towards ignorance without knowing his own true divine nature. The Jiva (individual soul) being overpowered by ignorance and the modifications, forgets its pristine purity and moves in various forms.

The Primordial Nature or the Unmanifested is a dark matrix with infinite potentialities. It is not a substance. Sound and energy are in an undifferentiated state in It. The whole world gets involved into It during the cosmic dissolution. There is no relationship of substance or quality between It and the three Gunas. The qualities are the Mulaprakriti and the latter is the former in a state of poise or equilibrium. This manifested world of the three qualities is compared to a twisted rope of three colours, viz., white, red and black. Each colour represents a Guna. Sattvic is white, Rajas is red and Tamas is black. The three are not in a state of equilibrium in the manifested world.

Water and the seed coming in contact with the earth produce sprouts which grow into trees. In the womb of Nature, the seed develops into the eightfold elements—earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism. The first fruit of the contact of Nature with the soul is the Mahat-Tattva or intellect. From intellect mind is born; from mind egoism; from egoism, the five elements.

There are four classes of beings, viz., Jarayuja, Andaja, Svedaja and Udbhijja. The Jarayuja is born of the placenta (viviparous). Human beings, cows, elephants, horses, etc., belong to this class. In this variety the five senses of knowledge exist. The Andaja is born of eggs (oviparous). In this variety the elements of wind and ether predominate. Lice come under the category of Svedaja: they are born of sweat. In this variety fire and water predominate. Trees that are born of seeds are classified under the head Udbhijja: in this variety earth and water predominate. (*Cf.* VII. 6; IX. 17; XV. 7)

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः सम्भवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥४॥

सर्वयोनिषु in all the wombs, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti (Arjuna), मूर्तयः forms, सम्भवन्ति are produced, याः which, तासाम् their, ब्रह्म Brahma, महत् great, योनिः womb, अहम् I, बीजप्रदः seed-giving, पिता father.

4. Whatever forms are produced, O Arjuna, in any womb whatsoever, the great Brahma is their womb and I am the seed-giving father.

Commentary: *I am the father:* The Primordial Nature is the mother. The whole manifested world is the child Nature has produced in its association with Me. Therefore I am called the father of this world.

Wombs: Such as the gods, the manes, men, cattle, beasts, birds, etc.

Forms: Bodies consisting of parts, limbs, organs, etc.

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥५॥

सत्त्वम् purity, रजः passion, तमः inertia, इति these गुणाः qualities, प्रकृतिसंभवाः born of Prakriti, निबध्नन्ति bind महाबाहो O mighty-armed, देहे in the body, देहिनम् the embodied, अव्ययम् the indestructible.

5. Purity, passion and inertia—these qualities, O Arjuna, born of Nature, bind fast in the body, the embodied, the indestructible.

Commentary: Sattva is the best. Rajas comes next. Tamas is the lowest and the worst. The three qualities indicate the triple mentality. They produce attachment in the individual souls, delude them and bind them down, as it were, to Samsara. Just as the three conditions of childhood, youth and old age are found in the same body, so also the three qualities inhere in the mind. The soul gets limited by identifying itself with body and the three qualities. It is subject to birth and death and experiences happiness and misery, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow till it realises its identity with the Supreme Self.

The word *Guna* is usually translated as 'quality'. It does not signify property, attribute or quality, such as the blue colour of a cloth. Gunas are really the primary constituents of Nature and are the basis of all substances. Therefore it is not proper to call them 'qualities inhering in substances'.

If you want to attain freedom or perfection, if you wish to become immortal, you must rise above the modes of Nature. You must transcend the Gunas.

If the water in the vessel is agitated, the reflected sun in the water also appears to be agitated through Pratibimba Adhyasa (superimposition of reflection on water). Even so the pure unchanging Self appears to be bound by the qualities of Nature through superimposition. In reality the Self is ever free and untainted. It is beyond them.

The Gunas which are only forms of ignorance are ever dependent on the knower of the field. They bind fast, as it were, the knower of the field. They have him as the basis of their existence.

A knowledge of the Gunas and their operation is very necessary. Only if you have this knowledge can you free yourself from their clutches.

Mahabaho: Mighty-armed with strong and sinewy arms reaching down to the knees. This is a very auspicious sign. Yogis and sages have such beautiful arms.

These three Gunas are present in all human beings. No one is free from the operation of any one of the three qualities of Nature. They are not constant. Sometimes Sattva predominates; at other times Rajas or Tamas predominates.

Sattva has the characteristic of effulgence. It is also harmony and goodness or purity. *Rajas* is passion or activity. *Tamas* is inertia or darkness.

Analyse all phenomena in terms of these three. Know their characteristics. Stand as a witness of these qualities. Do not identify yourself with them. Separate yourself from them. Become a Gunatita. You will attain Supreme Peace, immortality and eternal bliss. (*Cf.* XIII. 22)

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥६॥

तत्र of these, सत्त्वम् purity, निर्मलत्वात् from its stainlessness, प्रकाशकम् luminous, अनामयम् healthy, सुखसङ्गेन by attachment to happiness, बध्नाति binds, ज्ञानसङ्गेन by attachment to knowledge, च and, अनघ O sinless one.

6. Of these, Sattva, which from its stainlessness is luminous and healthy, binds by attachment to happiness and by attachment to knowledge, O sinless one.

Commentary: Sattva is stainless like the crystal. It lays for one the trap of happiness and knowledge. It is a golden fetter. A Sattvic man compares himself with others and rejoices in his excellence. He is puffed up with his knowledge. His heart is filled with pride when he thinks that he has more comforts or more pleasant experiences. He thinks, "I am happy; I am wise," and so he is bound as it were. These ideas really belong to the field but they are transferred through superimposition to the Self on account of the force of Sattva-Guna.

Rajas and Tamas are pitfalls on the path of knowledge.

This attachment to happiness is an illusion. This is ignorance. An attribute of the object cannot belong to the subject. All the qualities from 'desire' to 'firmness' (*Cf.* XIII. 6) belong to the field. From ignorance, non-discrimination is born and so the individual self is not able to discriminate between the permanent and the impermanent, the subject and the object.

Knowledge is an attribute of the Antahkarana (inner instrument, viz., mind, intellect, the unconscious and the ego) but not of the Self. If it were an attribute of the Self, it could not produce attachment and bondage. Sattva binds the soul to knowledge through attachment.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ।।७।।

रजः Rajas, रागात्मकम् of the nature of passion, विद्धि know, तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् the source of thirst and attachment, तत् that, निबध्नाति binds, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti (Arjuna), कर्मसङ्गेन by attachment to action, देहिनम् the embodied one.

7. Know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion, the source of thirst (for sensual enjoyment) and attachment; it binds fast, O Arjuna, the embodied one by attachment to action.

Commentary: The quality of Rajas denotes activity and ambition. The Rajasic man is full of cravings and desires. The cravings force him to act for their fulfilment. He gets attached to those who help him in the fulfilment of his desire and hates those who stand in his way. He is attached to action. He enters on great undertakings. He performs various sorts of sacrifices and rituals and charitable activities. He runs after sensual pleasures and his desires become insatiable like a flame fed by oil. The Self is not the doer. It is the silent witness; but Rajas creates in the man the idea, "I am the doer."

Rajas pleases the mind and keeps alive the passions.

A Rajasic man is never contented. He is ever greedy and restless. The more he acquires, the more passionate and greedy he becomes. Desires multiply. Nothing gives him satisfaction. If he is a millionaire, he tries to become a multi-millionaire. It is like petrol poured into the fire, which inflames it further. A Rajasic man loses his understanding and power of discrimination. His understanding is clouded. He is under intoxication of the pride of wealth. His intellect is turbid. He has a perverted intellect. On account of perversion of intellect misery appears to him to be happiness; pain appears to him to be pleasure; sorrow appears to be joy. His goal is money and women. He worships mammon as his god.

He runs after name, fame and comforts and involves himself in endless activities. Quickness has been associated with the fish, with the flash of lightning and with the glance of a woman. But Rajas is quicker than these. A Rajasic man is more active than these. He thinks: "What will happen to me after my possessions are gone?" and thus worries himself unnecessarily and engages himself in endless activities. He has no peace of mind.

He thirsts for what has not been attained and is attached to what has already been obtained. He wishes and tries to protect his possessions. This is Sanga. "I will do such and such an action. I will get such and such a result. I will do this sacrifice. I will enjoy in heaven." This sort of clinging to action and its fruits is *Karma Sanga.*

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥८॥

तमः inertia, तु but, अज्ञानजम् born of ignorance, विद्धि know, मोहनम् deluding, सर्वदेहिनाम् to all embodied beings, प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिः by heedlessness, indolence and sleep, तत् that, निबध्नाति binds fast, भारत O descendant of Bharata (Arjuna).

8. But know thou Tamas to be born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings; it binds fast, O Arjuna, by heedlessness, indolence and sleep.

Commentary: Tamas is that binding force with a tendency to lethargy, sloth and foolish actions. It causes delusion or non-discrimination. It binds him who associates the Self with the body. A Tamasic man acts under the compulsion of the wants of the body. He has no power of judgment. Troubled by the wants of the body he acts under pressure to keep himself alive. His actions are not guided by reason. They are on the plane of instinct. His senses are dull. He becomes infatuated and stupefied. He has no inclination to work. He yawns much. He sleeps too much. He always wants to sleep. He never knows when and how to act, what, to whom and how to talk. He takes delight in following the wrong path. He does not know how to behave or how to address others. He is thoughtless and ignorant. He forgets everything. He is negligent and indolent. He is just in a stage higher than lifeless matter.

He who is under the grip of heedlessness (*Pramada*) is not able to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal. This is an enemy of illumination, the effect of Sattva. He who is overpowered by laziness (*Alasya*) is not able to exert. This is an enemy of Pravritti, the effect of Rajas. Sleep (*Nidra*) is Laya-Vritti, (a state of absorption into ignorance) which is dependent on Tamas. This is the enemy of the works done by Sattva and Rajas.

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ।।९।।

सत्त्वम् purity, सुखे to happiness, सञ्जयति attaches, रजः active force, कर्मणि to action, भारत O Bharata, ज्ञानम् knowledge, आवृत्य

shrouding, तु verily, तमः inertia, प्रमादे to heedlessness, सञ्जयति attaches, उत but.

9. Sattva attaches to happiness, Rajas to action, O Arjuna, while Tamas verily shrouding knowledge attaches to heedlessness.

Commentary: Just as a dark cloud enshrouds the sun, so also Tamas envelops knowledge or the light of the Self. Tamas creates an attachment for heedlessness, that is, ignorance or forgetfulness of duty or the non-performance of necessary (obligatory) duties.

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥१०॥

रजः Rajas, तमः inertia, च and, अभिभूय having overpowered, सत्त्वम् Sattva, भवति arises, भारत O Arjuna, रजः Rajas, सत्त्वम् Sattva, तमः inertia, च and, एव even, तमः inertia, सत्त्वम् purity, रजः active force, तथा also.

10. Now Sattva arises (prevails), O Arjuna, having overpowered Rajas and Tamas; now Rajas, having overpowered Sattva and Tamas; and now Tamas, having overpowered Sattva and Rajas.

Commentary: Just as winter has its sway when summer and autumn have gone, just as sleep has its sway when a man is neither dreaming nor waking, so also Sattva has its sway when Rajas and Tamas are suppressed and makes people say that they are happy. The Sadhana for increasing Sattva is given in the 17th and 18th chapters.

Each quality acts in its own turn at different times. All the three qualities cannot operate at one and the same time. When one quality asserts itself or predominates by overpowering or suppressing the other two, it produces its own effect. Sattva produces knowledge and happiness; Rajas action; Tamas veiling of knowledge, inertia, error, indolence, sloth and sleep. When Sattva is in the ascendant in a man, he is endowed with discrimination. Sublime thoughts roll in his mind. He has pure understanding. His mind turns away from sensual pleasures and moves inward towards the Self.

What is the characteristic mark by which you can know that a particular quality is predominant or is in the ascendant? The answer is given in the following three verses.

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते ।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥११॥

सर्वद्वारेषु through every gate (sense), देहे in the body, अस्मिन् in this, प्रकाशः wisdom-light, उपजायते shines, ज्ञानम् knowledge, यदा when, तदा then, विद्यात् (it) may be known, विवृद्धम् (is) predominant, सत्त्वम् Sattva, इति thus, उत indeed.

11. When through every gate (sense) in this body, the wisdom-light shines, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant.

Commentary: When a particular quality becomes predominant, it reveals its distinctive characteristics in man. Just as jasmine scatters its fragrance far and wide, so also knowledge disseminates itself in all directions. Convert Tamas into Rajas and Rajas into Sattva. Now stand firm in Sattva. You will get increase of light, purity, peace and harmony. Sattva will lead you upwards. You will have an upward pull towards the Supreme Light. Sattvic diet, Japa, meditation, study of holy scriptures, living in seclusion, company of holy men, singing His Names and glories, and regulation of breath (Pranayama) will increase Sattva.

Introspect. Look within. Watch the Gunas carefully. Be vigilant. Stand as a doorkeeper. Allow only Sattvic thoughts to pass through the door of the mental factory. Check Rajas. Curb Tamas. When Sattva predominates there is unruffled peace of mind, inner harmony, perfect serenity and tranquillity. There is clarity or clear vision also. The understanding is not clouded. There is penetrative insight. The door or threshold of intuition is wide open. The senses will not run towards external objects.

The senses are the avenues of sense-knowledge. They are the gateways of perception for the Self. When light shines in all the gates of the body, such as the eyes, the ears, etc. (in other words when there is the manifestation of the Buddhi-Vritti of the Antahkarana), then knowledge arises. You can understand by the mark of knowledge that Sattva is predominant. You can also know that Sattva is increasing by the mark of happiness. Just as the aspirant knows that Sattva is predominant in him by the marks of knowledge and happiness, so also he knows by the mark of knowledge that Rajas and Tamas are gradually decreasing.

The ears shun whatever is imporper to be heard. The eyes abandon what they should not look at. The tongue avoids to speak anything that is not right to speak of. The mind is not attracted by the sensual objects. Purity thus increases gradually by Japa, meditation and self-restraint. If there is increase of Sattva or harmony, there is also increase of knowledge. Sattva is the only sure means for the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. It lays the foundation of knowledge.

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥१२॥

लोभः greed, प्रवृत्तिः activity, आरम्भः the undertaking, कर्मणाम् of actions, अशमः restlessness, स्पृहा longing, रजसि in Rajas, एतानि these, जायन्ते arise, विवृद्धे having become predominant, भरतर्षभ O best of the Bharatas (or O Lord of the Bharatas).

12. Greed, activity, the undertaking of actions, restlessness, longing—these arise when Rajas is predominant, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Greed:* Covetousness. Desire to appropriate the property of others; a desire to possess more wealth though one has sufficient already.

Pravritti: Action in general.

Asamah: Restlessness; being agitated by joy, attachment, etc. "I will do this and then I will take up that action. After finishing the second, I will take up the third, and so on." There is no end to the continuity of desire, will and action. This is called Asama or restlessness.

Spriha: Thirsting or longing for all sensual objects in general.

These are the characteristic marks that indicate that Rajas is predominant.

Do not mistake Rajasic restlessness or Rajasic movements for Karma Yoga or divine activity. People may say that they are doing selfless service to the world, but if you analyse their motives there will be the taint of personal desire in some form or other. Many persons cannot sit quiet even for a moment. They think that moving about here and there or doing some action or other is to be full of life. The Yogi or sage who sits still by calming the mind, who does nothing at all physically, is the most active man in the whole world; whereas the man who runs here and there and who is always very busy does nothing at all. This may be paradoxical to you. Very few can comprehend the truth of this statement. Sattva is intense activity. A wheel that revolves very rapidly appears to be at rest. So is Sattva. So is a Sattvic man.

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ।।१३।।

अप्रकाशः darkness, अप्रवृत्तिः inertness, च and, प्रमादः heedlessness, मोहः delusion, एव even, च and, तमसि in inertia, एतानि these, जायन्ते arise, विवृद्धे have become predominant, कुरुनन्दन O descendant of Kuru (Arjuna).

13. Darkness, inertness, heedlessness and delusion—these arise when Tamas is predominant, O Arjuna.

Commentary: When Tamas increases, darkness, a desire to do nothing, forgetfulness of one's duties and confusion come into existence.

Darkness: Absence of discrimination.

Apravritti: Inertness; extreme inactivity.

Pramada (heedlessness) and *Moha* (delusion) are the effects of darkness. These are the characteristics or marks which indicate that Tamas is predominant. Tamas is a great stumbling block to spiritual progress and success in any walk of life. It must be destroyed at all costs. People mistake Tamas for Sattva or Santi (peace). They take the Tamasic man for a silent Yogi! "All is Prarabdha! Everything is Maya! There is no world! Why should I work? Work will bind me. I am Brahman." This is not spirituality but pure and thick Tamas.

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥१४॥

यदा when, सत्त्वे in Sattva, प्रवृद्धे having become predominant, तु verily, प्रलयं death, याति meets, देहभृत् the embodied one, तदा then, उत्तमविदाम् of the knowers of the Highest, लोकान् to the worlds, अमलान् of the spotless, प्रतिपद्यते (he) attains.

14. If the embodied one meets with death when Sattva is predominant, then he attains to the spotless worlds of the knowers of the Highest.

Commentary: *Lokan Amalan:* Spotless worlds; Brahmaloka and the like where Rajas and Tamas never predominate.

The Highest: Deities such as Hiranyagarbha.

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥१५॥

रजसि in Rajas, प्रलयम् death, गत्वा meeting, कर्मसङ्गिषु among those attached to action, जायते (he) is born, तथा so, प्रलीनः dying, तमसि in inertia, मूढयोनिषु in the wombs of the senseless, जायते (he) is born.

15. Meeting death in Rajas, he is born among those who are attached to action; and dying in Tamas, he is born in the womb of the senseless.

Commentary: *Meeting with death in Rajas:* If he dies when Rajas is predominant in him, he is born among men who are attached to action. If he dies when Tamas is fully predominant in him, he takes birth in ignorant species such as cattle, birds, beasts or insects.

He may take his birth amongst the dull and the stupid or the lowest grades of human beings. He need not take the body of an animal. This is the view of some persons.

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥१६॥

कर्मणः of action, सुकृतस्य (of) good, आहुः (they) say, सात्त्विकम् sattvic, निर्मलम् pure, फलम् the fruit, रजसः of Rajas, तु verily, फलम् the fruit, दुःखम् pain, अज्ञानम् ignorance, तमसः of inertia, फलम् the fruit.

16. The fruit of good action, they say, is Sattvic and pure, verily the fruit of Rajas is pain, and ignorance is the fruit of Tamas.

Commentary: Good action: Sattvicd action. The fruit of good action is both happiness and knowledge.

They: The wise.

Rajas means Rajasic action as this verse deals with action. The fruit of Rajasic action is bitter. Rajasic action brings pain, disappointment and dissatisfaction. Rajasic activity leads to greed. When the Rajasic man tries to gratify his original desires, new desires crop up. This opens the door to greed.

Tamas: Tamasic action, unrighteous deeds or sin (Adharma). There is no knowledge within and no foresight.

सत्त्वात्सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥१७॥

सत्त्वात् from purity, सञ्जायते arises, ज्ञानम् knowledge, रजसः from activity, लोभः greed, एव even, च and, प्रमादमोहौ heedlessness and delusion, तमसः from inertia, भवतः arise, अज्ञानम् ignorance, एव even, च and.

17. From Sattva arises knowledge, and greed from Rajas; heedlessness and delusion arise from Tamas, and also ignorance.

Commentary: *From Sattva:* When Sattva becomes predominant. Sattva awakens knowledge just as the sun causes daylight. Sattva enlightens the intellect.

Greed is insatiable like fire. Greed brings misery and pain. Greed is born of Rajas. Rajas creates insatiable desire. Rajas makes one blind to the interests and the feelings of others. A Rajasic man treats others as tools to be utilised for his own self-advancement or self-aggrandisement.

Tamas produces short-sightedness, torpor and ignorance. A Tamasic man does not think a bit of the future consequences. He completely identifies himself with the body and begins to fight with people if they injure his body or speak ill of him. He is ready to do any sinful act in retaliation. He has no sense of proportion and no sense of balance or poise.

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥१८॥

ऊर्ध्वम् upwards, गच्छन्ति go, सत्त्वस्थाः in Sattva seated, मध्ये in the middle, तिष्ठन्ति dwell, राजसाः the Rajasic, जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्थाः abiding in the function of the lowest Guna, अधः downwards, गच्छन्ति go, तामसाः the Tamasic.

18. Those who are seated in Sattva go upwards; the Rajasic dwell in the middle; and the Tamasic, abiding in the function of the lowest Guna, go downwards.

Commentary: Those who abide in Sattva become the lords of heaven after giving up the physical body. The Rajasic are reborn on this earth as human beings. The Tamasic go downwards, i.e., they will be born in the wombs of cattle and beasts. They may take their birth amongst the lowest grades of human beings. The lowest grades of human beings are only brutes though they have assumed human form. Their actions are brutal. Therefore it is not necessary for them to enter into animal incarnation.

Man identifies himself with Nature on account of the force of ignorance or illusory knowledge and gets attached to the qualities of Nature. This is the cause of his birth in the wombs of high or low creatures. He feels, "I am happy, miserable or deluded," on account of the attachment to the Gunas.

The nature of the Gunas, their functions, how they bind a man to the Samsara, the effects of each Guna when it is predominant, and the plane reached by the man when he is under the influence of a particular Guna are described in the previous verses. Now the Lord describes in the following verse that liberation comes when one knows Him Who is above the three Gunas.

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥१९॥

न not, अन्यम् other, गुणेभ्यः than the Guṇas, कर्तारम् agent, यदा when, द्रष्टा the seer, अनुपश्यति beholds, गुणेभ्यः than the qualities, च and, परम् higher, वेत्ति knows, मद्भावम् My Being, सः he, अधिगच्छति attains to.

19. When the seer beholds no agent other than the Gunas and knows That which is higher than they, he attains to My Being.

Commentary: The Supreme Self is in no way contaminated by the qualities. The liberated sage exclaims: "I am the witness of the qualities. I am neither the enjoyer nor the doer. The qualities form the motive power of all actions. I am beyond the Gunas. The Gunas alone are responsible for all actions. I am entirely distinct from the qualities. I am pure consciousness. I cannot be touched by the qualities. I am like the ether."

When a man gets illumination or attains knowledge of the Self, when he realises that there is no agent except the Gunas which are themselves modified as the bodies, the senses and their objects, when he knows that it is the Gunas only that become the agent in all transformations, in all states and in all actions, and when he realises the Supreme Self Who is distinct from the Gunas, Who is the silent witness of the Gunas and their functions, he attains to My state (liberation), i.e., becomes identical with Me. He becomes a Gunatita, i.e., one who has transcended the three Gunas.

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥२०॥

गुणान् Gunas, एतान् these, अतीत्य having crossed, त्रीन् three, देही the embodied, देहसमुद्भवान् out of which the body is evolved, जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैः from birth, death, decay and pain, विमुक्तः freed, अमृतम् immortality, अश्नुते attains to.

20. The embodied one having crossed beyond these three Gunas out of which the body is evolved, is freed from birth, death, decay and pain, and attains to immortality.

Commentary: Just as a river is absorbed in the ocean, so also he who has, while still alive, gone beyond the qualities which form the seed from which all bodies have sprung and of which they are composed, is absorbed in Me. He ever enjoys the bliss of the Eternal. He attains release or Moksha. He attains to My Being.

When the Lord said that the wise man crosses beyond the three qualities and attains immortality, Arjuna became inspired with the desire of learning more about it. Just as he has asked a question about the sage of steady wisdom in chapter II, verse 54, he now asks Lord Krishna about the characteristics of a sage who has crossed over the three qualities. How does he act? What is his conduct or behaviour? How has he gone beyond the qualities?

अर्जुन उवाच

कैर्लिंगैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते ॥२१॥

कैः by what, लिंगैः by marks, त्रीन् three, गुणान् Gunas, एतान् these, अतीतः crossed, भवति becomes, प्रभो O Lord, किमाचारः what (is his) conduct, कथम् how, च and, एतान् these, त्रीन् three, गुणान् Gunas, अतिवर्तते goes beyond.

Arjuna said:

21. What are the marks of him who has transcended the three qualities, O Lord? What is his conduct and how does he go beyond these three qualities?

Commentary: Arjuna said: "O Lord, by what characteristics may a man be recognised as having gone beyond the three qualities? What is the behaviour of that Trigunatita sage (one who has gone beyond the three qualities) and how does he go beyond the world and is above the Gunas? Tell me that."

These are the characteristics of the sage who has gone beyond the Gunas; others should cultivate them.

Just as a king is able to remove the grievances and sorrows of his servants, so also the Lord is able to remove the sorrows of His devotees. That is the reason why Arjuna addresses Sri Krishna as 'Lord' and uses the term 'Prabhu'. By using this word, Arjuna hinted to the Lord that He alone was capable of relieving his sorrows and pains. (*Cf.* II. 54)

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥२२॥

प्रकाशम् light, च and, प्रवृत्तिम् activity, च and, मोहम् delusion, एव even, च and, पाण्डव O Arjuna, न not, द्वेष्टि hates, सम्प्रवृत्तानि (when) gone forth, न not, निवृत्तानि when absent, काङ्क्षति longs.

The Blessed Lord said:

22. When light, activity and delusion are present, he hates them not, nor does he long for them when they are absent.

Commentary: This is the answer to Arjuna's first question. Light is the effect of Sattva, activity of Rajas and delusion of Tamas. The liberated sage does not hate them when they are present. When Sattva shines he is not carried away by pride. He does not think, "I am a very learned man." When the impulse for action is awakened in the body or when there is a divine call for him to do work for the solidarity of the world (Lokasangraha) he does not hate any action and he does not regret it after the action is accomplished. He feels no remorse while performing actions. The work is like the play of a child. While inertia increases in him, he is not deluded by infatuation.

Only an ignorant man thinks: "Tamas has entered into me. I am deluded. I am under the influence of heedlessness, torpor, sloth, laziness and indolence. Now I am under the influence of Rajas. I am forced to do activities. This is painful. I have fallen from my true nature. This gives me a lot of pain. Now Sattva predominates in me. I am attached to happiness and knowledge. I am proud of my learning and better status."

The liberated sage who has transcended the Gunas does not thus hate them when they are present.

A man of Sattva or Rajas or Tamas longs for light, action or inertia which first manifested themselves and disappeared. But a liberated sage or one who has gone beyond the three qualities does not at all long for these states which have vanished. This mark or characteristic is an internal mental state. It cannot be perceived or detected by others. It can be felt by one's own self alone. If one is endowed with clairvoyant vision or the inner eye of intuition, he can directly behold the longings that arise in the mind of another man.

In the following three verses the Lord gives His answer to Arjuna's second question: "What is the conduct of the sage who has crossed over the Gunas?"

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥२३॥

उदासीनवत् like one unconcerned, आसीनः seated, गुणैः by the Gunas, यः who, न not, विचाल्यते is moved, गुणाः the Gunas, वर्तन्ते operate, इति thus, एव even, यः who, अवतिष्ठति is self-centred, न not, इङ्गते moves.

23. He who, seated like one unconcerned, is not moved by the qualities, and who, knowing that the qualities are active, is self-centred and moves not,

Commentary: He is seated as a neutral (one who inclines to neither party). He is free from likes and dislikes. He is entirely unconcerned whether the qualities with their effects and the body come or go. He is like the spectator at a football or a cricket match or a drama. Just as the sky remains unconcerned when the wind blows, so also he remains quite unconcerned when the qualities operate.

He does not swerve from the path of Self-realisation. He treads the path firmly. He thinks and feels: "The qualities are modified into the body, senses and sense-objects. They act and react upon one another," and remains unshaken by them. He abides in his own Self and stands firm like the mountain Meru. (*Cf.* III. 28; V. 8 to 11)

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥२४॥

समदुःखसुखः alike in pleasure and pain, स्वस्थः standing in his own Self, समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः regarding a clod of earth, a stone and gold alike, तुल्यप्रियाप्रियः the same to the dear and the undear, धीरः firm, तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः the same in censure and praise.

24. Who is the same in pleasure and pain, who dwells in the Self, to whom a clod of earth, stone and gold are alike, who is the same to the dear and the unfriendly, who is firm, and to whom censure and praise are as one,

Commentary: Night and day have no meaning to a post fixed in the ground. Even so pleasure and pain have no meaning to a sage who dwells in his own Self. He is above the pairs of opposites. In his eyes cow-dung or gold, a jewel or a stone, are of equal value. He is free from the idea of giving and taking. His mind is not perturbed by anything pleasant or unpleasant. He is the same towards agreeable and disagreeable things. Praise and censure cannot affect him. He stands adamant. He abides in his own essential state as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. He is ever calm and serene. (*Cf.* V. 18)

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥२५॥

मानापमानयोः in honour and dishonour, तुल्यः the same, तुल्यः the same, मित्रारिपक्षयोः to friend and foe, सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी abandoning all undertakings, गुणातीतः crossed the Gunas, सः he, उच्यते is said.

25. Who is the same in honour and dishonour, the same to friend and foe, abandoning all undertakings—he is said to have transcended the qualities.

Commentary: He keeps a balanced mind in honour and dishonour. He is the same to friend and foe. He is not affected by the dual throng. He has risen above the Gunas. He rests in his own essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. He abides in his own Self. He is a Gunatita (one who has transcended the qualities of Nature) who is not affected by the play of the qualities. He keeps an even outlook amidst changes. He maintains a calm equilibrium.

He abandons all actions that can bring visible or invisible fruits or results; but he does actions that are necessary for the bare maintenance of his body. The qualities described in verses 23, 24 and 25, such as indifference, etc., are the means for attaining liberation. They represent the ideal that you should have before you. The aspirant should cultivate them. But one attains knowledge of the Self when he abides in his own true nature. These attributes form part and parcel of his nature and serve as marks to indicate that he has crossed beyond the three qualities.

The Lord gives in the following verse the answer to the third question of Arjuna: "How does one go beyond the three qualities?"

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥२६॥

माम् Me, च and, यः who, अव्यभिचारेण unswerving, भक्तियोगेन with devotion, सेवते serves, सः he, गुणान् Gunas, समतीत्य crossing beyond, एतान् these, ब्रह्मभूयाय for becoming Brahman, कल्पते is fit.

26. And he who serves Me with unswerving devotion, he, crossing beyond the qualities, is fit for becoming Brahman.

Commentary: A Sannyasi or even a Karma Yogi who serves Him (the Isvara, Narayana Who abides in the hearts of all beings) with unswerving devotion, is endowed with the knowledge of the Self. He then goes beyond the three qualities and becomes fit to become Brahman, for attaining liberation or release from birth and death.

He attains to the knowledge of the Self through the grace and mercy of the Lord. "To these ever-harmonious devotees worshipping Me in love, I give the Yoga of discrimination by which they come unto Me." "Out of pure compassion for them, dwelling within their Self, I destroy the ignorance-born darkness by the shining lamp of wisdom." (Chapter X. 10 and 11)

Avyabhicharini Bhakti: The devotee constantly meditates on the Lord. He has exclusive devotion to the Lord alone. He has no other thought save that of his Lord. His mind is filled with the thoughts of the Lord. His thoughts flow towards the Lord like the continuous flow of oil from one vessel to another. There is Sajatiya Vritti Pravahạ, i.e., unbroken flow of the one thought of God. There is total abandonment of thoughts of sensual objects. Constant thinking of God is the sure means for crossing beyond the three qualities of Nature.

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥२७॥

ब्रह्मणः of Brahman, हि indeed, प्रतिष्ठा the abode, अहम् I, अमृतस्य the immortal, अव्ययस्य the immutable, च and, शाश्वतस्य everlasting, च and, धर्मस्य of Dharma, सुखस्य of bliss, एकान्तिकस्य absolute, च and.

27. For I am the abode of Brahman, the immortal and the immutable, of everlasting Dharma and of absolute bliss.

Commentary: The Self Which is immortal and immutable, Which is attainable by the eternal Dharma of the knowledge of the Self, Which is unending bliss, abides in Me, the Supreme Being. I, the innermost Self, am the abode of the Supreme Self. The aspirant beholds, with the eye of intuition, that the innermost Self is the very Supreme Self, through Self-realisation.

The Lord bestows grace and mercy on His devotees through His Sakti, energy or power, or Maya. Sakti and the Lord are one. Just as heat is inseparable from fire, so also Maya or Sakti is inseparable from the Lord. Sakti cannot be distinct from the Lord in Whom She inheres.

There is another interpretation. By *Brahman* here is meant the Brahman with attributes or qualities, the conditioned Brahman. I, the Absolute Brahman, transcending the attributes or qualities, the unconditioned Absolute, am the abode of the Saguna (conditioned) Brahman Who is immortal and imperishable. I am also the abode of the eternal Dharma of Jnana-nishtha (establishment in the highest wisdom) and the abode of the unending bliss born of that unswerving devotion.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fourteenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Division of the Three Gunas.

अथ पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः

FIFTEENTH DISCOURSE

पुरुषोत्तमयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE SUPREME SPIRIT

श्री भगवानुवाच

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥१॥

ऊर्ध्वमूलम् rooted above, अधःशाखम् branches below, अश्वत्थम् the Asvattha, प्राहुः they speak of, अव्ययम् indestructible, छन्दांसि metres or hymns, यस्य of which, पर्णानि leaves, यः who, तम् that, वेद knows, सः he, वेदवित् is the knower of the Vedas.

The Blesed Lord said:

1. They (the wise) speak of the indestructible peepul tree having its root above and branches below, whose leaves are the metres or hymns: he who knows it is a knower of the Vedas.

Commentary: The description of the universe as a peepul tree is only metaphorical. This peepul is said to be eternal because it cannot be cut except by the axe of knowledge.

All persons depend upon the Lord for the fruits of their actions, because He alone knows the right relation between the actions and their fruits. He alone is the dispenser of the fruits of actions of human beings. The wise persons also depend upon the Lord for the fruit of their knowledge. The Lord alone removes the veil of ignorance through His grace and mercy. The inclination for Advaita Vedantic Sadhana arises through the Lord's grace. "The desire for the realisation of the Oneness is produced in the minds of wise men by the grace of the Lord, which is the antidote to all fears." (Avadhuta Gita, I. 1)

Those who serve the Lord with unswerving or single-minded devotion go beyond the three qualities of Nature through His grace. They attain knowledge of the Self through the grace of the Lord and get release from the round of birth and death. Those who have a right understanding of the real nature of Brahman or the Supreme Being also get emancipation easily.

The Lord teaches Arjuna in this discourse about the real nature of Brahman or the Supreme Self and the path that leads the soul to union with Him. The Lord describes the nature of Samsara or worldly life as a peepul tree in order to create non-attachment or dispassion, because he who is endowed with true and lasting dispassion alone is fit for attaining the knowledge of the Self. Samsara is compared to a tree, because it can be cut off like a tree.

All the other trees have their roots below, but this peculiar, strange and most wonderful tree of Samsara (Maya) has its root above, in Brahman. This peepul tree is different from all other trees. Brahman is the resting place or support of everything. It is eternal. It is great. It is the most high. It is the Supreme Being. It is supreme over all things. It is the source of everything. Therefore it is said that It is the One above. This One above is the root of this tree of Samsara. Brahman Who is superior to all is Urdhva. That which has Brahman as its cause is *Urdhvamulam.*

In the Puranas it is said: "The tree of the Unmanifest has sprung from Brahman. Buddhi is its trunk, the sense-openings are its hollows, the great elements its boughs, the sense-objects its leaves and branches, Dharma and Adhrama (virtue and vice) its beautiful flowers, pleasure and pain its fruits. Having cut asunder this tree with the powerful sword of the knowledge of the Self, and then having attained to the eternal bliss of Brahman, no one comes back from there again."

Brahman is the root of this tree. It is the upper part of this tree and so It is called Urdhva. In reality there are no distinctions such as upward, downward or middle in the One Which is the indivisible unity.

The name *Asvattha* is usually derived from *A-svattha* which means "not standing or enduring or remaining till tomorrow." *A* means 'not'; *Sva* means 'tomorrow'; *Ttha* means 'remaining'

This is quite an appropriate word for this *world-tree* which is ever changing and passing away.

In the Katha Upanishad also there is a mention about this Asvattha tree (II. 6. 1). The Gita is an essence of the Upanishads only.

Samsara is generally understood by the common people as meaning "remaining surrounded by one's wife and children and doing one's daily duties." This is a restricted or narrow meaning. Samsara means "the whole world-process" or the "cosmic manifestation" or the "ever-changing phenomenal world." Hiranyagarbha, the individual souls, the cosmic intelligence, egoism, the root-elements, etc., represent the branches of this tree of Samsara. They extend downwards. They evolve into grosser and grosser states. Therefore it is said that the tree has its branches below. Egoism is the sprout which goes downwards in three directions, viz., the three qualities of Nature.

Mind is the offshoot. Then come the five elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether, and the five organs of knowledge. Then comes sound which stimulates the ears to hear sweet music. Then comes touch which stimulates the skin to enjoy soft things. Then comes form which stimulates the eye to behold beautiful objects. Then comes taste which stimulates the tongue to enjoy palatable things. Then comes smell which stimulates the nose to enjoy fragrant and scented objects.

From the roots of actions with expectation of fruits a new branch of rebirth comes up. The mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom and the human kingdom are all branches of this tree of Samsara. Man does good and evil actions with the help of the body and takes births to experience the fruits thereof. The human body is the water for this tree of Samsara.

The body itself is the peepul tree. The root is the cerebro-spinal nervous system (brain). The various nerves are the branches that ramify downwards to the various organs distributed over the body.

Avyaya: Eternal, because this tree rests on an unbroken series of births without beginning and end; it is thus eternal. It can be cut down by the sword of knowledge of Brahman. Just as the leaves of a tree protect it, so also the Vedas protect this tree of Samsara, treating of virtue and vice, with their causes and fruits.

He who knows this tree of Samsara and its roots as described above is a knower of the Vedas. He is a knower of the teachings of the Vedas. Not even an iota remains to be known beyond this tree of Samsara and its root. He who knows it is omniscient. The Lord has eulogised the knowledge of the tree of Samsara and its root in order to encourage aspirants to acquire this knowledge.

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा
गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि
कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥२॥

अधः below, च and, ऊर्ध्वम् above, प्रसृताः spread, तस्य its, शाखाः branches, गुणप्रवृद्धाः nourished by the Gunas, विषयप्रवालाः sense-objects (are) its buds, अधः below, च and, मूलानि the roots, अनुसन्ततानि are stretched forth, कर्मानुबन्धीनि originating action, मनुष्यलोके in the world of men.

2. Below and above spread its branches, nourished by the Gunas; sense-objects are its buds; and below, in the world of men, stretch forth the roots, originating action.

Commentary: The countless objects, large and small, which life needs are all products of the five elements through the activity of the qualities. This tree of Samsara is nourished by the three qualities of Nature. The sense-objects are its buds and the roots which grow downwards are the bonds of Karma for those who lead a life of passion and attachment in this world, who are under the sway of likes and dislikes. The sprouts of this marvellous tree are the charming objects of the senses with their characteristics of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. The roots, the Karmic tendencies from the past lives, grow downwards to generate the bonds of Karma in the world of men. These roots strengthen the bondage by further actions.

The primal root is ignorance from which arises the eightfold Nature—the five elements, mind, intellect and egoism. From the stem of the tree spring four branches called Svedaja, Andaja, Jarayuja and Udbhijja. Eighty-four lakhs (eight million and four hundred thousand) of species came into being.

One branch shoots straight upwards. This is the branch of Dharma which yields the fruit of enjoyment in heaven. Another branch is the branch of dispassion which yields the fruit of Self-realisation. The sun, the planets, the manes and the sages have also come out of this wonderful tree. Above them are the branches of the worlds of Indra and the gods. Still higher are those of the sages and the men of austerities and penance. Still higher is the Satyaloka where Hiranyagarbha dwells.

From man down to the immovable objects below and from him up to the realm of the Creator above, whatever regions are attained in accordance with the nature of knowledge or action, they are the ramifying branches of the tree of Samsara. They are nurtured and fattened by the three Gunas which form their material base.

The sense-objects such as sound, touch, colour, taste and smell represent the buds that sprout from the branches of the physical bodies which are the products of actions.

The highest root of this wonderful tree is Brahman. The secondary roots are the latent impressions (Samskaras) of likes and dislikes, which spread in this world of men and impel them to perform virtuous and vicious actions and bind them fast to actions.

Now listen to the way by which this tree can be cut off. Only he who thus cuts his bondage to this tree of Samsara can be happy even in this world. He has the highest wisdom because he stands as a spectator of this tree and knows it as it is, without being tied to it.

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते
नान्तो न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा ।
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल-
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ।।३।।

न not, रूपम् form, अस्य its, इह here, तथा as such, उपलभ्यते is perceived, न not, अन्तः (its) end, न not, च and, आदिः (its) origin, न not, च and, संप्रतिष्ठा foundation or resting place, अश्वत्थम् Asvattha, एनम् this, सुविरूढमूलम् firm-rooted, असङ्गशस्त्रेण with the axe of non-attachment, दृढेन strong, छित्त्वा having cut asunder.

3. Its form is not perceived here as such, neither its end nor its origin, nor its foundation nor resting place: having cut asunder this firmly rooted peepul tree with the strong axe of non-attachment,

Commentary: The idea is continued in the next verse.

So long as one is under the sway of ignorance, he cannot understand the form of this tree, its end, origin and foundation (middle). O Arjuna! Thou mayest perhaps consider that such a huge tree cannot be uprooted by any means whatever. It is not so. However firmly rooted it may be, it can be cut by the powerful axe of non-attachment or dispassion within the twinkling of an eye.

After cutting this tree you will have to look within, meditate on the Self and behold the Supreme.

Tatha: As such: As described above. Is it necessary to pull down castles in the air or to break the horns of a hare or to pluck a flower growing in the sky or to get butter from the milk of a tortoise or oil from stone? Similarly, O Arjuna, there is no reality in this tree. Therefore why should you entertain any fear as to whether it may be uprooted or not? Its form as such is not perceived by anybody here; it is like a dream or a mirage or an imaginary city in the sky formed by the clouds or caused by a juggler. It appears and disappears. This tree has *Drishta-Nashta-Svarupa* like the mirage. That object which is destroyed when one beholds it is Drishta-Nashta. Nobody has perceived the end, the origin or the foundation of this illusory tree. No one can say that it has arisen from such and such a place or point.

Samsara or the peepul tree is inveterately deep-rooted. You will have to struggle hard to uproot it with its seed or the self-reproducing deep root.

Asanga: Dispassion, freedom from attachment to children, wealth and the world.

Dridhena: Strong. You will have to cut the tree with a strong axe which is sharpened again and again on the whetstone of the practice of discrimination. Further your mind should be turned towards the Supreme Being with the strong determination that you can attain eternal bliss only in Him and that He is the only Reality.

The desire for sensual pleasure is Sanga. Its opposite (dispassion) is Asanga. Renunciation of the three kinds of Eshanas (desires), viz., children, wealth and the world (Putra-Vitta-Lokeshana) is Asanga. Just as the axe cuts the tree, so also dispassion cuts this tree of Samsara. Hence dispassion is termed an axe. Cutting the tree of Samsara is annihilation of egoism, ignorance, latent tendencies, and renunciation of the fruits of all actions, through the practice of dispassion, control of the mind and the senses, etc. (*Cf.* VII. 14)

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं
    यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये
    यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥४॥

ततः then, पदम् goal, तत् That, परिमार्गितव्यम् should be sought for, यस्मिन् whither, गताः gone, न not, निवर्तन्ति return, भूयः again, तम् that, एव even, च and, आद्यम् primeval, पुरुषम् Purusha, प्रपद्ये I seek refuge, यतः whence, प्रवृत्तिः activity or energy, प्रसृता streamed forth, पुराणी ancient.

4. Then That goal should be sought for, whither having gone none returns again. I seek refuge in that Primeval Purusha Whence streamed forth the ancient activity or energy.

Commentary: That which fills the whole world with the form of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss is Purusha. Or, that which sleeps in this Puri (city) of the body is the Purusha.

Single-minded devotion which consists of ceaselessly thinking of or meditating on the Supreme Being is the sure means of attaining Self-realisation. Taking sole refuge in the Primeval Purusha is the means to know or realise that supreme goal going whither the wise do not return again to this world of death.

The aspirant should know the abode of Vishnu. He should struggle hard to reach it. He should seek it by taking refuge in the Primeval Purusha. If he reaches this immortal abode of Vishnu or the imperishable Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour and glory he will never return to this mortal world.

The Primeval Purusha or the pure, Supreme Being Who is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute is the goal or the supreme abode or the abode of Vishnu. Just as illusory objects like elephants, horses, etc., come forth through the jugglery of the magician, so also this ancient energy or the original divine power or emanation of this tree of illusory Samsara has streamed forth from that Primeval Purusha.

What sort of persons reach that goal eternal? Listen.

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा
अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञै-
र्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥५॥

निर्मानमोहाः free from pride and delusion, जितसङ्गदोषाः victorious over the evil of attachment, अध्यात्मनित्याः dwelling constantly in the Self, विनिवृत्तकामाः (their) desires having completely turned away, द्वन्द्वैः from the pairs of opposites, विमुक्ताः freed, सुखदुःखसंज्ञैः known as pleasure and pain, गच्छन्ति reach, अमूढाः the undeluded, पदम् goal, अव्ययम् eternal, तत् That.

5. Free from pride and delusion, victorious over the evil of attachment, dwelling constantly in the Self, their desires having completely turned away, freed from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach the eternal goal.

Commentary: Wherever there is pride there is stiff egoism. Absence of discrimination between the Real and the unreal is *Moha*. Perversion is Moha. Infatuation is Moha. Those who are free from likes and dislikes even when they attain pleasant or unpleasant objects have triumphed over the evil of attachment.

Kartritva Abhimana or the idea "I am the doer" is *Sanga.* Likes and dislikes are the *Doshas* or the evils. Heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour, censure and praise, etc., are the pairs of opposites. Only those who have destroyed ignorance and who have attained the knowledge of the Self reach the eternal goal.

Adhyatmanityah: Ever engaged in the contemplation of the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Being.

Vinivrittakamah: All the desires vanish *in toto* without leaving any trace or taint behind. They who have reached this stage become Yatis or Sannyasins. In the fire of wisdom all desires are burnt. As the birds fly away from a tree which has caught fire, so do desires go away from him.

Tat: That (the goal) described above.

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥६॥

न not, तत् that, भासयते illumines, सूर्यः the sun, न not, शशाङ्कः the moon, न not, पावकः fire, यत् to which, गत्वा having gone, न not, निवर्तन्ते (they) return, तत् that, धाम Abode, परमम् Supreme, मम My.

6. Neither doth the sun illumine there nor the moon, nor the fire; having gone thither they return not; that is My supreme abode.

Commentary: That supreme abode is self-illumined for Brahman is self-luminous. It existed before the sun, the moon and the fire came into existence during creation. It remains even after they dissolve into the Unmanifested during the dissolution of the world.

This verse is taken from the Kathopanishad: "The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor does this lightning shine and much less this fire. When It shines, everything shines after It, by Its light, all these shine" (Chap. II, 5. 15). The same idea occurs in the Svetasvatara Upanishad (6. 14) and the Mundaka Upanishad (II. 2. 10). The sun, the moon, etc., derive their light from Para Brahman. Nothing else is needed for illuminating the Supreme Being because It is self-luminous.

Dhama paramam: Supreme abode or super-excellent seat or Para Brahman.

Though the sun is endowed with the power of illumining all, it cannot illumine the Supreme Being.

यत् धाम वैष्णवं पदं गत्वा प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते यत् च सूर्यादिभिः न भासयते तत् धाम पदं परमं मम विष्णोः ।

"That abode, to which having gone, none returns, and which the sun, moon, stars, lightning and fire do not illumine, is the highest abode of Vishnu."

(*Cf.* VIII. 21)

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥७॥

मम My, एव even, अंशः portion, जीवलोके in the world of life, जीवभूतः having become a soul, सनातनः eternal, मनःषष्ठानि with mind as the sixth, इन्द्रियाणि the (five) Indriyas, प्रकृतिस्थानि abiding in Prakriti, कर्षति draws (to itself).

7. An eternal portion of Myself having become a living soul in the world of life, draws to (itself) the (five) senses with the mind for the sixth, abiding in Nature.

Commentary: Now the Lord explains how the individual soul comes into being. The individual soul is a ray of the Lord. A ray of the Supreme Being enters Nature, draws to itself the five senses and the mind and becomes an embodied soul (Jiva) by assuming a body. Here is a description of how the subtle body or Linga-Sarira enters the gross body.

Although the sun is reflected in water, it is not in any way tainted. When a crystal comes in contact with a red cloth or red flower, it seems to be red; but it is really not so. Even so the Supreme Being is not in any way tainted by the actions of the individual soul.

Ignorance is the limiting adjunct of the individual soul. On account of the limitation caused by this ignorance the soul experiences that it is the doer and the enjoyer. In essence the individual soul is identical with the Supreme Being or Brahman. When ignorance, the limiting adjunct or principle, is destroyed, the individual soul (Jiva) realises it identity with the Supreme Being (Brahman).

Just as the ether in the pot becomes one with the universal ether when the limiting adjunct, the pot, is broken, so also the individual soul becomes one with Brahman when the limiting adjunct, ignorance, is annihilated. Just as there is no return of the pot-ether after it has become one with the universal ether when the pot is destroyed, so also there is no return of the individual soul after the limiting adjunct (the Antahkarana, i.e., mind and the other inner instruments) is destroyed. It becomes one with Brahman.

Pratibimba (reflection) is only a portion of the Bimba (object). The reflected sun is only a portion of the real sun (the rays of the sun). When the water is removed the reflected sun goes back to the original sun, as it were. It does not return to the water again. Even so, when ignorance or the mind is annihilated, the Jiva (individual soul) which is a reflection of Brahman in ignorance is absorbed in the Bimba Brahman. It does not return to this world of birth and death.

The individual soul is only an imaginary or fictitious portion of Brahman. It is not a real portion. For the Supreme Being is indivisible. It has no parts. If It has parts, It would be liable to destruction when the parts are disjointed or removed.

The senses abide in Nature, in their respective seats such as ear, skin, tongue, eye and nose. A Sannyasi living in the caves of the Himalayas dreams that he is a married man and moves about hither and thither to get a job for his livelihood. Even so, the individual soul forgets its real divine nature, mistakes the impure, perishable body for the pure, immortal Self and imagines that it is the real actor and enjoyer by identifying itself with the body. It says, "I am the Karta. I am the Bhokta. I am a soul bound by Samsara. I am happy. I am miserable." It becomes finite.

In essence the Jiva is identical with Brahman. The difference is on account of delusion or imagination or superimposition. The illusion of difference is due to the limiting adjunct or principle (the mind) even as the illusion that the ether in the pot is different from the universal ether is caused by the limiting adjunct, viz., the pot. *Jiva-brahma-bheda-bhranti* (the delusion of the distinction between the individual soul and the Supreme Being) is removed when the limiting adjunct (mind) is annihilated. In deep sleep the mind rests in a subtle state along with all the Samskaras (impressions) and Vasanas (tendencies) in its cause (primordial ignorance). Again it comes back from this state of ignorance when you return to the waking state. If the cause (ignorance) is destroyed by the knowledge of the Self, its effect (mind) is also annihilated.

Just as the tortoise stretches out its head and feet which were in a state of Laya (absorption) in its body, so also the individual soul stretches out its mind and senses which were in a state of absorption in primordial ignorance in deep sleep, to enjoy the sensual objects in the waking state.

A ray of the Supreme Being enters Nature, draws to itself the five senses and the mind: In this verse the formation of the astral body (Linga-Sarira or Sukshmasarira) is described.

The Sruti declares:

स एष इह प्रविष्टः आनखाग्रेभ्यः तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् ॥

"That Supreme Being Itself, having created this aggregate of the body from the head to the toe, entered this body in the form of the Jiva."

According to Vedanta there are nineteen principles, viz., the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, the five vital airs (Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana and Udana), the mind, intellect, Chitta (the subconscious or the unconscious mind), and egoism. We will have to conclude that the words *the five senses and the mind* point to the collection of the remaining thirteen principles also.

Amsa: This does not mean here a 'particle' or 'portion' which has been cut out. It is like the Amsa of the ether in the pot: the ether is not cut out but still remains the whole ether. (*Cf.* XIV. 3)

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥८॥

शरीरम् a body, यत् when, अवाप्नोति obtains, यत् when, च and, अपि also, उत्क्रामति leaves, ईश्वरः the Lord, गृहीत्वा taking, एतानि these, संयाति goes, वायुःthe wind, गन्धान् the scents, इव as, आशयात् from (their seats (the flowers).

8. When the Lord (as the individual soul) obtains a body and when He leaves it, He takes these and goes (with them) as the wind takes the scents from their seats (flowers, etc.).

Commentary: Here is a description of how the subtle body leaves the gross body.

When the Jiva, the Lord of the aggregate of the body and the rest takes up this body he brings in with him the mind and the senses; when he leaves the body at its dissolution he takes with him the senses and the mind, just as the wind carries with it the fragrance from the flowers. Wherever he goes and whatever form he assumes he again operates through these senses and the mind.

Lord: Jiva, the Lord of the aggregate of the body and the rest.

The Self appears to be an agent or an enjoyer only when he possesses or assumes a body.

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ।।९।।

श्रोत्रम् the ear, चक्षुः the eye, स्पर्शनम् the (organ of) touch, च and रसनम् the (organ of) taste, घ्राणम् the (organ of) smell, एव even च and अधिष्ठाय presiding over, मनः the mind, च and, अयम् this (soul), विषयान् objects of the senses, उपसेवते enjoys.

9. Presiding over the ear, the eye, touch, taste and smell, as well as the mind, it enjoys the objects of the senses.

Commentary: Here is a description of how the subtle body remaining in the gross body enjoys the objects of the senses.

The individual soul uses the mind along with each sense separately and enjoys or experiences the objects of the senses such as sound, touch, colour (form), taste and smell.

It sits on the marvellous car of its mind, passes through the gateway of the ear in the twinkling of an eye and enjoys the various kinds of music of this world. It holds the reins of the nerves of sensation, enters the domain of touch through the portal of the skin and enjoys the diverse kinds of soft objects. It roams about in the hills of beautiful forms and enjoys them through the windows of his eyes. It enters the cave of taste by the avenue of the tongue and enjoys dainties, palatable dishes and refreshing beverages. It enters the forest of scents through the door of the nose and enjoys them to its heart's content.

It makes its abode in the ears, the eyes, the skin, the tongue and the nose, as also in the mind and enjoys the objects of the senses. It gains experiences of the outer world through the mind, intellect, subconscious mind, egoism, the ten senses and the five vital airs.

Ghranameva cha: The word *cha (and)* indicates that we shall have to include the five organs of action, and also the fourfold inner instrument (mind, intellect, subconscious mind and egoism). In the Katha Upanishad it is said: आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ।। "The Self, the senses and the mind united, the wise call 'the enjoyer'."

(*Cf.* V. 15 to 29; IX. 24; XIII. 21 to 32)

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ।।१०।।

उत्क्रामन्तम् departing, स्थितम् staying, वा or, अपि also, भुञ्जानम् enjoying, वा or, गुणान्वितम् united with the Gunas, विमूढाः the deluded, न not, अनुपश्यन्ति do see (Him), पश्यन्ति behold (Him), ज्ञानचक्षुषः those who possess the eye of knowledge.

10. The deluded do not see Him Who departs, stays and enjoys; but they who possess the eye of knowledge behold Him.

Commentary: Though the Self is nearest and comes most easily within their field of vision or consciousness, the ignorant and the deluded are not able to behold Him, because they are swayed by the qualities of Nature; their minds constantly run towards the sensual objects and are saturated with passion; they identify the Self with the body; their vision is engrossed in external forms. But those who are endowed with the inner eye of intuition do behold Him.

Yama said to Nachiketas: "The self-existent Brahma created the senses with outgoing tendencies; therefore man beholds the external universe and not the internal Self." He added: "But some wise men with their senses turned away from the objects, desirous of immortality, turn their gaze inwards and behold the Self within (seated in their heart)." (Katha Upanishad IV. 1)

Those who possess the inner eye of knowledge behold that the Self is entirely distinct from the body. They realise the Self's separate existence from the body and know that the body moves and acts on account of Its presence therein, just as the iron moves and acts in the presence of the magnet.

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥११॥

यतन्तः striving (for perfection), योगिनः the Yogins, च and, एनम् this, पश्यन्ति see, आत्मनि in the Self, अवस्थितम् dwelling, यतन्तः striving, अपि also, अकृतात्मानः the unrefined, न not, एनम् this, पश्यन्ति see, अचेतसः unintelligent.

11. The Yogins striving (for perfection) behold Him dwelling in the Self; but, the unrefined and unintelligent, even though striving, see Him not.

Commentary: The description of the evolution of the individual soul is now complete.

The Yogins who strive with an iron determination, fiery resolve, faith, earnestness and well-balanced mind, see Him established in their hearts. They behold Him dwelling in their own mind or intellect. They recognise Him—"This I am." But those who are of dull intellect and without proper discipline of the mind and the senses, who have not been purified by austerity, selfless service and charity, who have not subdued their senses, who have not practised regular meditation, who have not given up their evil ways, who have not eradicated lust, pride, egoism, anger, greed and hypocrisy, who have not developed true discrimination between the Real and the unreal, however hard they may struggle to know Him by means of the study of the sacred scriptures, do not behold Him. They are not able to attain Self-realisation. Mere study of scriptures alone cannot help one who has an impure mind to attain Self-realisation. The aspirant should have a calm and pure mind. He should practise constant, protracted and profound meditation on the Self. Only then will he realise, recognise and behold the Self abiding in his own heart.

That Goal (the Supreme Being) which the fire, stars, lightning, sun and moon do not illumine, having reached which the aspirants do not return to this Samsara or the world of birth and death, of which the individual souls are only imaginary parts appearing so on account of the limiting adjunct (ignorance), just as the ether in the pot appears to be limited though it is one with the universal ether—is the essence of all worldly experiences.

Just as the ether in the pot becomes identical with the universal ether when the limiting adjunct (pot) is broken, so also the individual soul becomes identical with the Supreme Being when the limiting adjunct (ignorance) is destroyed through the knowledge of the Self or Self-realisation born of meditation on the right significance of the great sentences of the Upanishads, viz., Tat-Tvam-Asi (That thou art) or Aham-Brahma-Asmi (I am the Supreme Being). Then he realises that Brahman is the essence of all and that He is the basis of all experiences.

In order to make Arjuna understand this, the Lord gives a brief summary of His manifestations in the following four verses. A description is given here of the all-pervasiveness of the Self.

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ।।१२।।

यत् which, आदित्यगतम् residing in the sun, तेजः light, जगत् the world, भासयते illumines, अखिलम् whole, यत् which, चन्द्रमसि in the moon, यत् which, च and, अग्नौ in the fire, तत् that, तेजः light, विद्धि know, मामकम् Mine.

12. That light which residing in the sun illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire—know that light to be Mine.

Commentary: The immanence of the Lord as the all-illuminating light of consciousness is described in this verse.

I am the cause and the source of the light by which the sun illumines the world, as also the reflected light of the sun in the moon and that of fire.

Tejah: Light: The light of consciousness.

If that is so, an objector says: "The light of consciousness exists alike in all moving and unmoving objects. Then why has the Lord mentioned this special qualification of light as residing in the sun, moon and fire? Please explain." We say: "The higher manifestation of the light of consciousness in the sun, etc., is due to a large concentration of Sattva in them. Sattva is very brilliant and luminous in them. That is the reason why there is this special qualification."

Here is an illustration. The face of a man is not at all reflected on a wall, piece of wood or a block of stone, but the same face is reflected beautifully in a very clean mirror. The degree of clearness of the reflection in the mirror is according to the degree of transparency of the mirror. The more the transparency of the mirror, the better the reflection of the face; the less the transparency, the worse the reflection. Even so God's light shines in the sun and also in the pure heart of a devotee.

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥१३॥

गाम् the earth, आविश्य permeating, च and, भूतानि all beings, धारयामि support, अहम् I, ओजसा by (My) energy, पुष्णामि (I) nourish, च and, औषधीः the herbs, सर्वाः all, सोमः moon, भूत्वा having become, रसात्मकः watery.

13. Permeating the earth I support all beings by (My) energy; and having become the watery moon I nourish all herbs.

Commentary: The immanence of the Lord as the all-sustaining life is described in this verse.

Ojas: The energy of the Lord (Isvara). The vast heaven and earth are firmly held by this energy. It permeates the earth to support the world. This energy is destitute of passion and attachment. As the vast earth is supported by the energy of the Lord, it does not fall, it is not broken down to pieces and it does not sink into the nether worlds.

The Lord penetrates the earth and supports all movable and immovable objects by His energy.

Rasatmakah somah: The watery moon: The moon is regarded as the repository of all savours or fluids (Rasas). I, becoming the watery moon, nourish all herbs and plants such as rice, wheat, etc., by infusing sap into them, and make them savoury. I feed the vegetable kingdom with My vital juice (Ojas) which pervades the soil and generates sweet juice or sap in herbs, plants and trees. The watery or savoury moon nourishes all herbs and plants by infusing sap or savours into them.

Moreover—

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ।।१४।।

अहम् I, वैश्वानरः (the fire) Vaisvanara, भूत्वा having become, प्राणिनाम् of living beings, देहम् the body, आश्रितः abiding, प्राणापानसमायुक्तः associated with Prana and Apana, पचामि (I) digest, अन्नम् food, चतुर्विधम् fourfold.

14. Having become the fire Vaisvanara, I abide in the body of living beings and, associated with the Prana and the Apana, digest the fourfold food.

Commentary: The immanence of the Lord as the gastric fire in all living beings is described in this verse.

Vaisvanara: The fire that abides in the stomach. This fire is fanned by the bellows of the incoming and the out-going breaths continuously and large quantities of food are digested. Inside the wonderful laboratory of the stomach I digest the food by taking the form of this gastric fire.

Four kinds of food: (1) Food which has to be eaten by mastication (Bhakshyam). (2) That which has to be sucked in (Bhojyam). (3) That which has to be licked (Lehyam). (4) That which has to be devoured or swallowed (Choshyam). Another classification is as follows: (1) Rice is Prithivi-Annam (solid food) for human beings. (2) Water is Apyannam (watery food) for birds like the Chataka. (3) Fire is Tejasannam (hot food) for certain creatures. (4) Air is Vayvannam (air as food) for serpents.

अयमग्निर्वैश्वानरो योऽयमन्तः पुरुषः येनेदमन्नं पच्यते ॥

"This fire which is within man and by which the food is digested is Vaisvanara." (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5. 9. 1)

He who thinks or meditates and feels that the Vaisvanara fire is the eater, that the food eaten by the fire is the Soma (moon) and that the two together form Agni-Soma is not contaminated by the impurities in the food. He who meditates before he takes his food that the whole world which is in the form of eater and eaten is made up of Agni and Soma, is not tainted by the evil arising from eating bad food.

Repeat this verse daily before you take your food. You will be free from all taints of impurity in food.

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो
मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो
वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥१५॥

सर्वस्य of all, च and, अहम् I, हृदि in the heart, सन्निविष्टः seated, मत्तः from Me, स्मृतिः memory, ज्ञानम् knowledge, अपोहनम् (their) absence, च and, वेदैः by the Vedas, च and, सर्वैः (by) all, अहम् I, एव even, वेद्यः to be known, वेदान्तकृत् the author of the Vedanta, वेदवित् the knower of Vedas, एव even, च and, अहम् I.

15. And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory and knowledge, as well as their absence. I am verily That which has to be known by all the Vedas; I am indeed the author of the Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas am I.

Commentary: I am seated in the hearts of all sentient beings as their innermost Self. Therefore from Me, the Self of all beings, are memory, knowledge and their loss. Righteous persons have knowledge and memory as a result of virtuous deeds. Sinful persons have loss of memory and knowledge as a result of vicious deeds. Virtue promotes peace and hence intellectual powers.

Apohanam: Loss (destruction or absence) of memory and knowledge, as also of the "reasoning faculty." The loss of memory and knowledge is due to lust, anger, grief and delusion.

Smriti: Memory. It is a special modification of the mind (Antahkarana Vritti) born of the Samskaras that causes the revival of the past experiences or enjoyments of sensual objects of this life in a worldly man who has not practised Yoga. A Yogi gets revival of experiences of his past lives and transcendental knowledge that is beyond time, space and causation and visible nature.

I am the central topic of the Vedas. To understand the Vedas is to know Me. I, the Supreme Being, am to be known in all the Vedas. It is I Who know the Vedic teaching or the meaning of the Vedas. I cause the teaching of the Vedanta to be handed down in regular succession. I am the author of what is beyond the Vedas, viz., the Upanishads that constitute the Vedanta, that deal with the transcendental Supreme Being beyond all names and forms and devoid of all qualities.

A brief description of the glories of the Lord Narayana as manifested through special vehicles has been given in the above four verses. From the next verse a description of the form of Purushottama Who is free from any limiting adjunct is given. (*Cf.* X. 20)

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ।।१६।।

द्वौ two, इमौ these, पुरुषौ Purushas (beings), लोके in the world, क्षरः the perishable, च and, अक्षरः the imperishable, एव even, च and, क्षरः the perishable, सर्वाणि all, भूतानि beings, कूटस्थः the immutable (unchanging), अक्षरः the imperishable, उच्यते is called.

16. Two Purushas there are in this world, the perishable and the imperishable. All beings are the perishable and the Kutastha—the unchanging—is called the imperishable.

Commentary: Now the Lord describes the three aspects of the divine existence. One is the individual soul called the perishable, the second is the imperishable or the Maya Sakti of the Lord and the third is the Purushottama or the Supreme Being.

The perishable comprises the whole world of changing forms. From Brahma down to the tiny blade of grass, all movable and immovable objects, all that can be thought of by the mind, all that is made up of the five elements, all that is changing, all that has names and forms, all that appears to the naked eye and what is described as the body and the modifications of the "field", in the thirteenth chapter, are Kshara or the perishable. Kshara is the changing one. It is the ever-changing form of matter which is inert or insentient. Akshara is the changeless.

In Samsara there are two categories arranged in two separate groups of beings, called Purushas, as they are the limiting adjuncts of the Purusha. Maya Sakti, the illusory power of the Lord, is the seed from which the perishable being takes its birth. It is the seat of all the latent impressions of desires, actions, etc., of various perishable creatures. Maya Sakti is the Akshara Purusha. The unmanifest condition is generally described as deep ignorance or sleep for there is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness. It is only a potential state. It is the condition in which all forms of life with its accompanying limitations lie latent, just as the tree lies latent in the seed of the fruit. In this state matter and energy are one. In this state sound, matter and energy exist in an undifferentiated state. In this state the Gunas exist in a state of equilibrium.

The imperishable is known as the Kutastha, i.e., that which remains immovable like a heap. That which is at the root (Kuta) of all these beings is the Kutastha. Or, Kuta also means 'illusion', and Kutastha means that which manifests itself in diverse forms of illusion. That which conceals the Truth and shows the false thing and deceives the worldly-minded people is Maya or Kuta. That which is of the form of the Avarana-Vikshepa Sakti (veiling and vacillating power) is Kutastha. As this Maya Sakti cannot be destroyed except by the knowledge of the Self, it is said to be endless. That is the reason why this is called Akshara. That seed of Samsara has no end. Therefore, it is said to be imperishable in the sense that it is not destroyed in the absence of knowledge of the Self. But the seed is scorched or destroyed *in toto* when one gets the knowledge of Brahman. The illusion vanishes and everything is realised as the one Cosmic Consciousness. Only the illusory perception of matter is destroyed.

Purushottama or the highest Purusha is distinct from these two—the perishable and the imperishable. He is not affected by the evils of the two vehicles or limiting adjuncts of the perishable and the imperishable. He is eternal, pure, intelligent and free by nature.

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥१७॥

उत्तमः the Supreme, पुरुषः Purusha, तु but, अन्यः another, परमात्मा the highest Self, इति thus, उदाहृतः called, यः who, लोकत्रयम् the three worlds, आविश्य pervading, बिभर्ति sustains, अव्ययः the indestructible. ईश्वरः Lord.

17. But distinct is the Supreme Purusha called the highest Self, the indestructible Lord Who, pervading the three worlds, sustains them.

Commentary: *Purushottama* is beyond the universe though He pervades the three worlds. Therefore He is called the Supreme Being by the Vedas and men of this world. He pervades the three worlds and upholds them; yet, He is not tainted by the world. He is above the world or worldliness.

Just as the waking state is different from the dream or the deep sleep states, just as the orb of the sun is different from his rays or the mirage they cause, so also is the highest Purusha different from the perishable and the imperishable Purushas.

The highest Purusha is the haven of peace. In Him all take their refuge and eternal rest. He is incomparable for He is self-contained; there is nothing like Him. He can only be compared to Himself. The imperishable Being (Akshara Brahman) Who is beyond the world and the Avyaktam (the Unmanifested) are essentially the same as the Purushottama Who transcends both the Kshara and the Akshara.

The Purushottama is quite distinct from the two—Kshara and Akshara. He is the Supreme Being. The physical body, the astral body and the causal body are also termed the 'Self'. But these are secondary selves. Paramatma or the Supreme Self is the primary Self. Purushottama or Paramatma is the supreme or the highest when compared with the other secondary selves created by ignorance. He is the innermost consciousness of all beings. He is the support of everything. He is the Niyanta, the Inner Ruler. He is independent. Therefore He is known as the Supreme Self in the Vedanta.

Anyah: Another, quite distinct from the two.

Lokatrayam: The three worlds: Bhuh (the earth), Bhuvah (the mid-region) and Svah (heaven) are the three worlds.

Purushottama is further described as follows: He is the imperishable and omniscient Lord Narayana Who permeates the three worlds by His vital energy and sustains them by His mere existence in them.

Avyaya: Imperishable, that which is free from the modifications such as birth, death, etc. Just as the king who rules his subjects and controls them is distinct from them, so also the Supreme Being Who is the ruler of the perishable and the imperishable is distinct from them. *(Cf.* VIII. 20)

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥१८॥

यस्मात् as, क्षरम् the perishable, अतीतः transcend, अहम् I, अक्षरात् than the imperishable, अपि also, च and, उत्तमः best, अतः therefore, अस्मि (I) am, लोके in the world, वेदे in the Vedas, च and, प्रथितः declared, पुरुषोत्तमः the Highest Purusha.

18. As I transcend the perishable and am even higher than the imperishable, I am declared to be the highest Purusha in the world and in the Vedas.

Commentary: *Purushottama* is a well-known name of the Lord. The name is quite appropriate as He is the supreme Purusha.

Kshara: The perishable—the tree of Samsara.

Akshara: The imperishable—the seed of the tree of Samsara.

Because I excel the perishable (the tree of illusory Samsara) and am more excellent also than the imperishable (the seed of the tree of the illusory Samsara) and because I am thus superior to the perishable and the imperishable, I am proclaimed in the world and in the Vedas as the highest Purusha. Devotees know Me as such. Poets also describe Me as such.

I am beyond all limitations. There is no trace of dualism in Me. Therefore, I am called by all and by the scriptures the highest Purusha.

यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥१९॥

यः who, माम् Me, एवम् thus, असम्मूढः undeluded, जानाति knows, पुरुषोत्तमम् the Supreme Purusha, सः he, सर्ववित् all-knowing, भजति worships, माम् Me, सर्वभावेन with his whole being (heart), भारत O Bharata.

19. He who, undeluded, knows Me thus as the highest Purusha, he, knowing all, worships Me with his whole being (heart), O Arjuna.

Commentary: The glory of the knowledge of the Self is described in this verse.

Asammudhah: Undeluded, free from delusion. The undeluded does not identify himself with the physical body. He never looks upon the physical body, the life-force, senses, mind, intellect and the causal body as the Self or as belonging to himself, because he is resting in his own essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute and because he identifies himself with Brahman or the Supreme Being.

That aspirant who knows that Sri Krishna is not a human being and that He is the highest Purusha or the Supreme Being is undeluded. Such an aspirant or devotee alone worships Him with his whole being. He is the Sarvavit or Sarvajna, all-knower. He knows and realises that Lord Krishna, the supreme Lord, is the Inner Self of all beings. He beholds the One in the many, and the many in the One. For him there is neither high nor low, neither pleasure nor pain, neither virtue nor vice, neither good nor evil, neither likes nor dislikes.

Me: The Lord as specified above.

Sarvavit: One who knows everything in detail.

Knows that 'I am He'.

Sarvabhavena: With all his heart, with his whole being, whole-heartedly; with his whole thought devoted exclusively to the Self of all; with his whole mind centred on the Supreme Self alone.

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयाऽनघ ।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥२०॥

इति thus, गुह्यतमम् most secret, शास्त्रम् science (teaching), इदम् this, उक्तम् has been taught, मया by Me, अनघ O sinless one, एतत् बुद्ध्वा knowing this, बुद्धिमान् wise, स्यात् will become, कृतकृत्यः (who has) accomplished all the duties, च and, भारत O Bharata.

20. Thus, this most secret science has been taught by Me, O sinless one; on knowing this, a man becomes wise, and all his duties are accomplished, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Guhyatamam:* Most profound secret.

Buddhiman means here a knower of the Self or Atman.

The knowledge of the Self which gives emancipation from the round of birth and death, and freedom from the bonds of Karma is eulogised in this verse. If this most profound teaching is rightly understood, known or realised, it makes a man wise and gives him illumination. After this there is nothing left for him to know or strive for. He has reached the goal of life or the aim of human existence. He has arrived at the end of his journey. His endeavour for Self-realisation is over. He has attained perfection. He has complete knowledge of the Supreme Being. He gets Brahma Jnana. He moves in the consciousness of the Divine. He beholds the Self everywhere. He lives in Brahman. He regards all activities as His divine play.

When one realises Brahman, he has discharged all the duties of life. He is liberated from the bonds of Karma. He becomes a Jivanmukta or illumined sage who has transcended the body-consciousness, the three qualities of Nature, the three states of consciousness (wakeful state, dream and deep sleep), the pairs of opposites and the cycle of birth and death. He knows fully well that rebirth has been destroyed, that what has to be done has been accomplished, that life's highest goal has been reached and that he has nothing more to do or to learn. He has understood the profound mystery of life—the riddle of this universe. He is a Sarvavit or all-knower.

The whole of the Gita is called science, yet the fifteenth discourse alone is here declared as the science for the sake of eulogising it. The fifteenth discourse contains the quintessence of the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas. This is the butter churned from the milk of the Vedas. It has been said that, "He who knows the peepul tree knows the Veda" (XV. 1). The Lord has also said, "It is I Who am to be known by all the Vedas" (XV. 15). Only when a man knows this science as taught above does he become wise—but not otherwise. Whatever duty a Brahmana of the highest birth has to do, all that has been done when one attains the knowledge of the Self. "All actions in their entirety culminate in knowledge" (IV. 33). "This is the fulfilment of the birth, particularly of a Brahmana; because the twice-born accomplishes all his duties only by attaining to this, but not otherwise," says Manu Smriti.

As you have heard from Me this truth about the Supreme Being, you are a happy man and you have done all your duties; you have attained Self-realisation.

By using the words *Anagha* and *Bharata,* Lord Krishna hints that even when an ordinary man who knows this fifteenth discourse can attain knowledge of the Self and become a Kritakritya, then what to say of Arjuna who was sinless and who was born in a noble family with divine attributes? The Lord, by using the word *Anagha,* also indicates that the Guru who is a knower of Brahman should instruct the most profound secret (the science of the Self) only to qualified persons who are free from impurities of the heart or tossing of the mind, who are calm and endowed with the *four means* of salvation *(see page 58).* The man of impure mind will not be able to grasp the truth. The sinful man with his perverted intellect will distort the truth and thus pave the way for the destruction of himself and his followers.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifteenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit.

अथ षोडशोऽध्यायः

SIXTEENTH DISCOURSE

दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION BETWEEN THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIACAL

श्री भगवानुवाच

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ।।१।।

अभयम् fearlessness, सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः purity of heart, ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga, दानम् almsgiving, दमः control of the senses, च and, यज्ञः sacrifice, च and, स्वाध्यायः study of Sastras, तपः austerity, आर्जवम् straightforwardness.

The Blessed Lord said:

1. Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga, almsgiving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of scriptures, austerity and straightforwardness,

Commentary: The Lord made a mention of the three kinds of Nature that belong to sentient beings, viz., the nature of the gods, Asuras and Rakshasas, in the ninth discourse (verses 12 and 13). He now describes them in detail in this discourse. The distinction between the god or the god-man and the Asuras is clearly drawn in the first, second, third and fourth verses. Daivi Prakriti or the nature of the gods leads to Moksha or release from the round of birth and death. The nature of the Asuras and Rakshasas leads to bondage. This is an obstacle to the attainment of knowledge of the Self. The divine nature must be accepted and cultivated: the Asuric and Rakshasic nature should be abandoned. All these qualities are found in human beings. There are Sattvic people who possess the divine attributes; there are Asuras and Rakshasas among human beings also, who are endowed with demoniacal qualities, who are filled with excessive Tamas. In an ordinary man there is a mixture of the three Gunas. Tamas and Rajas pull a man downwards; Sattva lifts a man upwards. Tamas and Rajas lead to bondage; Sattva helps to attain salvation. Discipline yourself and develop Sattva! This is the foundation of Yoga. This is the first preparatory discipline. The first rung in the spiritual ladder is reached by developing Sattva. When the mind is Sattvic, there is calmness in it. Divine light can descend only when the mind is serene and cheerful.

The Sattvic man controls the senses, does selfless service, and practises Japa, Pranayama, concentration, meditation, self-analysis and enquiry of 'Who am I?' He is not attracted by sensual objects. He has a burning desire for attaining Moksha. He is humble, generous, merciful, forbearing, tolerant and pious. He destroys his little personality. The Rajasic man is proud, intolerant, egoistic, self-sufficient, lustful, hot-tempered, greedy and jealous. He works for his own glory and fame and self-aggrandisement. He develops his own little vain personality.

There is intimate connection between the Gunas and Karmas. The nature of the Karmas depends upon the nature of the Gunas. A Sattvic man will do virtuous actions. A Rajasic and Tamasic man will perform evil actions. It is the Guna that goads a man to do actions. The Self or Brahman is actionless. It is the silent witness.

The Lord sums up in the first three verses the qualities of a godly man who is inclined to the path of liberation. He then enumerates the qualities of the demoniacal man. The theme of this chapter is the tracing of the difference between the divine and the Asuric nature.

Virtue and vice are relative terms. The virtue of one period will become the vice of the other. From the transcendental point of view, there is neither virtue nor vice.

Why should there be evil? How did evil arise?—these are all transcendental questions (Atiprasnas). You can get answers to these questions only when you attain Self-realisation. People unnecessarily rack their brains to get an answer to these questions. It is a serious mistake.

Daivi Sampat (divine wealth or the wealth of divine qualities) helps the aspirant to attain knowledge of the Self. The Sattvic or divine attributes such as fearlessness, purity of heart, control of the senses, etc., constitute Daivi Sampat. They enable the aspirant to attain the highest state of superconsciousness (Nirvikalpa Samadhi) wherein the seer and the seen are united in one, the meditator and the meditated become identical. Divine qualities or attributes which go to augment the bliss of the Self, which help the aspirant to attain the happiness of the Self, are called divine wealth.

Among the divine qualities, fearlessness stands foremost. Fear is an effect of ignorance. Identification with the body causes fear. Blind attachment to the body, wife, children, house or property is the cause of fear. The sage who has realised the Self is absolutely fearless.

"He who knows the Bliss of Brahman from which words as well as the mind turn powerless, fears nothing." (Taittiriya Upanishad)

Fearlessness is the devout observance of the precepts enjoined in the scriptures without doubting. The state of being free from the fear, "How can I live now when I have renounced everything, when I have none to support me?" is fearlessness. A Sannyasi resolves when he takes Sannyasa, "I will not induce fear in any living creature." Keeping up this resolve of Abhaya Dana (gift of the boon of fearlessness to all creatures) in thought, word and deed is *Abhayam* or fearlessness. Fear can be removed by constant thinking of the immortal and all-blissful nature of the Self. If you lead a life of honesty and truthfulness, if you devoutly observe the precepts of the scriptures without doubting, if you lead a life of right conduct, and if you remember God always, you will become fearless. When one beholds the Self only everywhere, when the sense of duality has vanished, when the sense of unity has dawned in him, how can he be afraid of anything, how can the feeling of fear arise in him? Fearlessness is essential for the attainment of Moksha or salvation. Fearlessness is the chief characteristic of a liberated sage. It is the one accurate measure of one's spiritual progress. It is the cardinal virtue of an illumined sage. That is the reason why it is placed in the forefront of all divine qualities. Only a liberated sage can be absolutely fearless.

Sattvic Subha Vasana (good tendency) is Daivi Sampat. It induces a man to practise discrimination, dispassion, control of the mind and the senses, etc., which help him to attain knowledge of the Self. The Rajasic and the Tamasic (Asubha or evil) Vasanas (tendencies) which operate along the currents of Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes), which induce one to perform actions which are prohibited by the scriptures and which produce disastrous effects, constitute demoniacal nature.

In Asuric nature inclination towards sensual pleasures is predominant; in Rakshasic nature hatred predominates and the Rakshasa does various sorts of harm and injury to others.

Good tendencies lead to Moksha. Evil tendencies lead to bondage. Good tendencies must be cultivated. Evil tendencies should be eradicated. You should first have a knowledge of the essential nature of these two Vasanas, if you wish to cultivate the good tendencies and eradicate the evil ones. This sixteenth discourse gives a vivid description of these tendencies.

Sattvasamsuddhih: Purity of understanding, cleanliness of life or purity of heart. Purity of mind, i.e., giving up of cheating, hypocrisy, untruth and the like, in all dealings with the people, and doing transactions with perfect honesty and integrity is Sattvasamsuddhi.

When the understanding abides constantly in the immortal Self and is thus firm and steadfast, you may know this to be a condition of purity. On account of purity the mind can know the Self. The state of the mind wherein it is free from doubts like Asambhavana (thought of improbability of the existence of the Self), etc., through hearing of the scriptures is Sattvasamsuddhi. As purity of mind cannot be obtained without devotion to the Lord, devotion is implied in these Sattvic virtues.

Jnana: Knowledge; understanding the nature of the Self, as taught in the scriptures and by the preceptor; Self-realisation through meditation on the Great Sentence of the Upanishad, 'I am Brahman' *(Aham Brahmasmi)*, is Jnana.

Yoga is union of the individual soul with the Supreme Being; it is the direct realisation of the Self by concentration and meditation, through self-restraint or control of the senses. The aspirant cognises through direct perception by the inner eye of intuition or wisdom what has been learnt from the scriptures and the preceptor. The aspirant attains Self-realisation or direct knowledge. He becomes one with Brahman—the Absolute. He gets indirect knowledge or mere understanding or theoretical knowledge of Brahman from the scriptures. Now through the practice of Yoga he gets direct knowledge. The attempt which is favourable for the annihilation of the mind and the latent tendencies is also known as Yoga.

Jnanayogavyavasthitih: The state of Jivanmukti attained through Jnana Yoga, which is distinct from the state of the worldly-minded persons.

Fearlessness, purity of heart and steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga are the three pre-eminent virtues amongst the Sattvic attributes enumerated in verses 1 to 3. They are found in Jnana Yogins only. The other qualities are common to Jnana Yogins, Karma Yogins, Raja Yogins and Bhaktas. Unless you possess Sattvic virtues, you cannot practise any kind of Yoga. If you cultivate one virtue, all other virtues will cling to you by themselves. Fearlessness is the basis and foundation of the whole of man's moral structure within.

Svadhyaya and *Tapas* constitute Kriya Yoga. Svadhyaya constitutes Brahma-Yajna. Almsgiving and sacrifice pertain to Karma Yoga. Almsgiving, self-control and sacrifice constitute Daivi Sampat for householders. Those qualities mentioned in chapter XVI, verses 1 to 3, which belong to the aspirant who practises a particular form of Yoga constitute the Daivi Sampat of the disciple on that path.

Dana: Almsgiving; distributing food, clothes, etc., as far as it lies in one's power, according to one's means. A charitable man hastens to comfort the distressed and helps the needy. Charity is of three kinds, viz., Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic *(see chapter XVII,* 20 to 22). It opens the gates of heaven. It will bring nearer the means of liberation. Just as the tree gives fruit and shade without distinction, so also give to him who needs, without distinction, with a cheerful heart.

Dama: Self-restraint, self-control, control of the external senses. The control of the inner senses or the mind is described in the next verse.

The practice of self-control annihilates the union between the senses and the sensual objects. It separates the senses from their respective objects. The aspirant will not allow the wind of the sensual objects to blow through the gateway of his senses. He keeps the senses under the strictest restraint. He lights the fire of dispassion at all the ten gates of the body. He takes rigid vows. He observes Mauna (the vow of silence) and celibacy. He is moderate in his diet. He keeps the golden medium in everything. He checks the outgoing tendencies of the mind and the senses. He induces the mind and the senses to turn backwards towards their source. Just as an enemy is cut down by means of a weapon, so also every tendency towards sensual objects is cut down by the practice of self-control. All internal promptings, cravings and Vasanas should be burnt in the fire of renunciation, at the ten gates of the senses. As householders cannot practise perfect control of the senses, even moderation or regulated and disciplined life will constitute self-restraint for them. The practice of self-control includes forgiveness, harmlessness, truth, steadiness and patience.

Yajna: Sacrifice. The fire-worship (Agnihotra) and the like enjoined in the Vedas and also the sacrifice to the gods (Deva-Yajna) or worship of the gods, Pitri-Yajna, Bhuta-Yajna, Manushya-Yajna and Brahma-Yajna enjoined in the scriptures (Smritis).

Svadhyaya: Study of the Vedas in order to attain the 'unseen fruits'.

Tapas: Austerity, mortification of the body and other forms of penance. True Tapas is meditation on the Self. It is fixing the mind on Brahman or the Self. It is to separate oneself from the physical body and the other four 'sheaths' and to identify oneself with the Absolute. It is to turn the mind towards the soul. The three kinds of Tapas mentioned in chapter XVII, verses 14 to 16 come under this category.

Arjavam: Straightforwardness. This is conducive to the attainment of knowledge. The aspirant should always be candid, upright or straightforward. Straightforwardness should be his constant attitude. A just and truthful man alone can be straightforward. He is respected by the people. He is liked by all. He attains success in all his endeavours. He never hides facts or truth.

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥२॥

अहिंसा harmlessness, सत्यम् truth, अक्रोधः absence of anger, त्यागः renunciation, शान्तिः peacefulness, अपैशुनम् absence of crookedness, दया compassion, भूतेषु in beings, अलोलुप्त्वम् non-covetousness, मार्दवम् gentleness, ह्रीः modesty, अचापलम् absence of fickleness.

2. Harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion towards beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness,

Commentary: *Ahimsa:* Non-injury in thought, word and deed. By refraining from injuring living creatures the outgoing forces of Rajas are curbed. Ahimsa is divided into physical, verbal and mental.

Satyam: Truth: Speaking of things as they are, without uttering unpleasant words or lies. This includes self-restraint, absence of jealousy, forgiveness, patience, endurance and kindness.

Akrodhah: Absence of anger when insulted, rebuked or beaten, i.e., even under the gravest provocation.

Tyagah: Renunciation—literally, giving up; giving up of Vasanas, egoism and the fruits of action. Charity is also Tyaga. This has already been mentioned in the previous verse.

Santih: Serenity of the mind.

Apaisunam: Absence of narrow-mindedness.

Daya: Compassion to those who are in distress. A man of compassion has a tender heart. He lives only for the benefit of the world. Compassion indicates realisation of unity or oneness with other creatures.

Aloluptvam: Non-covetousness. The senses are not affected or excited when they come in contact with their respective objects; the senses are withdrawn from the objects of the senses, just as the limbs of the tortoise are withdrawn by it into its own shell.

Hrih: It is shame felt in the performance of actions contrary to the rules of the Vedas or of society.

Achapalam: Not to speak or move the hands and legs in vain; avoidance of useless action.

Straightforwardness, non-injury, absence of anger, etc., are special qualities of the Brahmanas. They are the Sattvic virtues which belong to them.

Moreover—

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥३॥

तेजः vigour, क्षमा forgiveness, धृतिः fortitude, शौचम् purity, अद्रोहः absence of hatred, नातिमानिता absence of over-pride, भवन्ति belong, सम्पदम् state, दैवीम् divine, अभिजातस्य to the one born for, भारत O descendant of Bharata (Arjuna).

3. Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride—these belong to the one born for a divine state, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Tejas:* Vigour, energy, brilliance or lustre of the skin. The aspirant who is bent on attaining salvation marches boldly on the spiritual path. Nothing can tempt him or slacken his progress. This unbroken progress towards the realisation of the Self or the Absolute is lustre. It overcomes the downward pull of Tamas.

Kshama: Forgiveness. He who is endowed with this virtue does not exhibit anger even when he is insulted, rebuked or beaten, although he is strong enough to take vengeance. He is unaffected by the insult or injury.

Dhriti: The sage absorbs within himself all calamities. He is steadfast even when he is in very adverse and trying conditions: this is a particular Sattvic Vritti or state of mind which removes depression or exhaustion of the body and senses when they sink down. An aspirant who is endowed with this divine attribute never gets disheartened, even when he is under severe trials and difficulties or tribulations. Dhriti is a divine 'pick-me-up' (tonic) when the body and the senses are in a state of low spirits or dejection.

Saucham: Purity. This is of two kinds, viz., external and internal. External purity is achieved by means of earth and water. The mind and heart (intellect) are freed from Maya (deception, lust, anger, greed, pride, jealousy, hypocrisy, likes and dislikes) by the practice of celibacy, forgiveness, friendliness, charity, humility, nobility, love, complacency, compassion, etc.—this is internal purity. This is more important than external purity.

Adroha: Absence of hatred, absence of desire to injure others.

Atimanita is great pride. A proud man thinks that he is superior to others and that he is worthy of being honoured by others. *Naatimanita* is the opposite of this quality.

Tejas, Kshama and Dhriti are the special qualities or Dharmas of the Kshatriyas (warrior class). These are the Sattvic qualities of Kshatriyas. Saucham and Adroha are the special Dharmas of the Vaisyas. They are the Sattvic qualities of the Vaisyas (merchant class). Absence of pride is the special Dharma of the Sudras (servant class). It is a Sattvic quality that belongs to the Sudras.

The divine wealth or *Daivi Sampat* consists of twenty-six attributes. This is a rare gift from the Lord. This is an inexhaustible wealth which cannot be taken away by dacoits. This helps the aspirant attain the imperishable and immaculate Brahmic seat. It is the short-cut to the realm of eternal bliss or Moksha.

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥४॥

दम्भः hypocrisy, दर्पः arrogance, अभिमानः self-conceit, च and, क्रोधः wrath, पारुष्यम् harshness, एव even, च and, अज्ञानम् ignorance, च and, अभिजातस्य to the one born for, पार्थ O Partha, सम्पदम् state, आसुरीम् demoniacal.

4. Hypocrisy, arrogance and self-conceit, anger and also harshness and ignorance, belong to one who is born for a demoniacal state, O Partha (Arjuna).

Commentary: *Dambha:* Hypocrisy. To pretend to be what one is not, to pretend to be religious and pious. It consists of bragging of one's own greatness. Religious hypocrisy is the worst form of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is a mixture of deceit and falsehood. Those who boast about their own merits will get demerit only.

Darpa: Arrogance. Pride of learning, wealth, high connection, etc. An arrogant man cannot endure to see his fellow-men happy. He is more and more enraged at the fortune of his fellow-men in the matter of learning, happiness and prosperity.

Parushyam (in speech): To speak of the blind as having lotus-like eyes, of the ugly as beautiful, of a man of low birth as one of high birth and so on, usually with an ulterior, selfish or evil motive.

Ajnanam: Ignorance, misconception of one's duties. An ignorant man is blind as to what should be done and what should not be done. There is absence of discrimination. Just as a child will put anything it gets in its hands into its mouth, whether it is clean or dirty, so also is the condition of the ignorant man who is not able to discriminate between the Real and the unreal, the good and the evil, virtue and vice. He is on the path of destruction. He does not know the road that leads to Moksha or liberation. He is drowned in the ocean of this worldly existence.

These are the six demoniacal qualities. These evil qualities constitute the satanic or demoniacal wealth. They are obstacles on the path of liberation.

By addressing Arjuna as 'Partha', Lord Krishna implies that Arjuna has no demoniacal qualities in him as he is born in a noble family and is the son of Pritha.

People of Asuric nature have no faith. They dispute every doctrine. They deny the existence of God. They deny the cycle of the world-process, the Vedas and the laws of ethics. Sensual indulgence is their goal. They rob people and take away their neighbours' wives. They kill people ruthlessly. They do not believe in reincarnation and in the other world. They have no idea of right conduct, purity and self-restraint.

Asuras are those persons who have waged war and who still wage war with the gods in heaven. Those who are endowed with Asuric tendencies or evil qualities are Asuras or demons. They exist in abundance in this iron age. Kamsa was an Asura. Hiranyakasipu was an Asura.

Even a man of university qualifications and titles is a veritable Asura if he is endowed with evil tendencies or Asubha Vasanas.

Esoterically, the war between the Asuras and the gods is the internal fight that is ever going on between the pure and the impure tendencies in man, between Sattva and Rajas-Tamas.

दैवी सम्पद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।
मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥५॥

दैवी divine, सम्पत् state, विमोक्षाय for liberation, निबन्धाय for bondage, आसुरी the demoniacal, मता is deemed, मा not, शुचः grieve, सम्पदम् state, दैवीम् the divine, अभिजातः one born for, असि (thou) art, पाण्डव O Pandava.

5. The divine nature is deemed conducive to liberation, and the demoniacal to bondage. Grieve not, O Arjuna, thou art born with divine endowments.

Commentary: *Sampat:* Endowment, wealthy state, nature, virtue.

Moksha: Liberation from the bondage of Samsara, release from the round of birth and death. The divine nature leads to salvation; the demoniacal nature, to bondage.

As Arjuna was already grief-stricken and dejected, Lord Krishna assures him not to feel alarmed at this description of the Asuric qualities which bring grief and delusion, as he was born with Sattvic tendencies, leading towards salvation. Arjuna, on hearing the words of Lord Krishna, might have thought within himself, "Do I possess divine nature or demoniacal nature?" The Lord, in order to remove Arjuna's doubt, said, "Grieve not, O Arjuna, thou art born with divine qualities. Thou art fortunate. Thou mayest attain to the happiness of Self-realisation."

"Do not think, O Arjuna, that by engaging yourself in battle and killing people you will become an Asura. Grieve not on this score. You will establish the kingdom of righteousness by fighting this righteous battle."

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च ।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥६॥

द्वौ two, भूतसर्गौ types of beings, लोके in world, अस्मिन् (in) this, दैवः the divine, आसुरः demoniacal, एव even, च and, दैवः the divine, विस्तरशः at length, प्रोक्तः has been described, आसुरम् demoniacal, पार्थ O Partha, मे from Me, शृणु hear.

6. There are two types of beings in this world, the divine and the demoniacal; the divine has been described at length; hear from Me, O Arjuna, of the demoniacal.

Commentary: The two divisions of created beings, the one divine and the other satanic, carry on their respective activities in accordance with their natural tendencies or traits.

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also you will find: "Verily there are two classes of the Creator's creatures—gods and demons" (I. 3. 1).

Bhutasargau: Creations of beings, types or classes of creatures. Creation here means what is created. The men who are created with the two kinds of nature, the divine and the demoniacal, are here mentioned as the "two creations." Every man in this world comes under the one or the other of the two creations, the divine and the demoniacal.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, "I will now describe to thee the characteristics of those men who are endowed with the devilish qualities. If you have an understanding of the demoniacal qualities, you will avoid them." The demoniacal nature is described in detail to the very end of this discourse.

There is some reference in chapter IX, verses 9, 11 and 12, to the demoniacal nature; but as the description is incomplete it is completed in this discourse.

The divine nature has been declared in detail by the blessed Lord in the previous chapters—the state of a Sthitaprajna in chapter II, the state of a Bhagavata in chapter XII and the state of a Trigunatita in chapter XIV and in the first three verses of this discourse.

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥७॥

प्रवृत्तिम् action, च and, निवृत्तिम् inaction, च and, जनाः men, न not, विदुः know, आसुराः the demoniac, न not, शौचम् purity, न not, अपि also, च and, आचारः (right) conduct, न not, सत्यम् truth, तेषु in them, विद्यते is.

7. The demoniacal know not what to do and what to refrain from; neither purity, nor right conduct nor truth is found in them.

Commentary: The demoniacal do not understand the nature of action and inaction (right abstinence). The idea of a Self apart from the body, doing nothing (actionless) but simply watching the play of the Gunas is something incomprehensible to them. They have no consideration for the interest of others. They work for the sake of their bodies or sensual enjoyment. They are greedy, selfish and cruel. Therefore, they have neither good conduct nor good behaviour. They are untruthful, unjust and impure. They do not know what actions they should do in order to attain the goal of life or end of human existence, nor from what actions they should refrain to ward off evil.

Those who are endowed with demoniacal qualities are sunk in the mire of ignorance. They are totally ignorant of what is prescribed or what is prohibited action. They have not the least idea of what purity or cleanliness is. Their actions are crooked. They know neither right Pravritti nor right Nivritti. They have no idea of virtue or vice or of scriptural injunctions or prohibitions. They will never speak loving words. They are hypocrites and liars.

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥८॥

असत्यम् without truth, अप्रतिष्ठम् without (moral) basis, ते they, जगत् the world, आहुः say, अनीश्वरम् without a God, अपरस्परसम्भूतम् brought about by mutual union, किम् what, अन्यत् else, कामहैतुकम् with lust for its cause.

8. They say, "This universe is without truth, without (moral) basis, without a God, brought about by mutual union, with lust for its cause; what else?"

Commentary: They hold that the universe is without any substratum or support or an undying basic reality.

This is a description of the opinion of atheists like the Charvakas and other materialists. They do not believe in the existence of Brahman Who is the support of this world. They do not even accept the existence of an Isvara in this world. They say: "We are unreal. Therefore this world also is unreal, the scriptures which declare the truth are also unreal. What else but lust can be the cause of this universe? Sexual passion is the sole cause of all living creatures. There is no such thing as the theory of Karma. The whole world is caused by the mutual union of ~~man and woman~~ under the impulse of lust. There is neither virtue nor vice. There is no Lord Who dispenses the fruits of actions of the individuals according to virtue and vice. Dharma and Adharma are not the basis of this world. Sexual desire is the sole basis for this universe. This world is a world of chance." They are not endowed with the faculty of introspection. They are ignorant of the 'field' (Nature) and 'knower of the field' (God).

Mutual union: Sexual union; it may mean the union of atoms. The world arose from the combination of atoms according to the Vaiseshikas.

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥९॥

एताम् this, दृष्टिम् view, अवष्टभ्य holding, नष्टात्मानः ruined souls, अल्पबुद्धयः of small intellect, प्रभवन्ति come forth, उग्रकर्माणः of fierce deeds, क्षयाय for the destruction, जगतः of the world, अहिताः enemies.

9. Holding this view, these ruined souls of small intellect and fierce deeds, come forth as the enemies of the world for its destruction.

Commentary: They rob others. They acquire wealth by destroying others. They boast of their evil actions.

Nashtatmanah: Ruined souls: They have lost all chances of attaining Self-realisation or going to the higher world.

Alpabuddhayah: They have a small intellect as they identify themselves with their little bodies full of impurities, as they have no conception of the Supreme Being, and as their intellects are concerned with the little sensual pleasures only (eating, drinking, etc.).

Ugrakarmanah: Of fierce deeds: they always injure others. They murder for acquiring wealth. They do any heinous crime to get money and women. They bring great confusion and destroy the peace and harmony of the world.

Enemies of the world: World here means people who live in the world.

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।
मोहाद्गृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥१०॥

कामम् desire, आश्रित्य abiding in, दुष्पूरम् insatiable, दम्भमानमदान्विताः full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, मोहात् through delusion, गृहीत्वा having held, असद्ग्राहान् evil ideas, प्रवर्तन्ते they work, अशुचिव्रताः with impure resolves.

10. Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they work with impure resolves.

Commentary: These soul-less malevolent persons perform cruel and sinful actions. Their minds are saturated with vanity, conceit and arrogance. They entertain in their minds unholy resolves and unreasonable ideas. They harbour insatiable desires in their hearts. Just as a monkey becomes more and more intoxicated if wine is given to it, so also the older they grow the more and more arrogant and lustful do they become. They cause the ruin and death of those around them. They boast of their own actions and treat others with great contempt. They are very much attached to their bodies. They worship their bodies. Their passion is boundless. They are stupid and obstinate and so they have no firm determination.

Desire is insatiable like fire. Enjoyment cannot bring about satisfaction of the desires. The more you enjoy, the stronger does the desire become. After an object is enjoyed, there springs up a desire to continue the enjoyment for ever. You take recourse to all sorts of devices to preserve the objects.

Although a man is not righteous he pretends to be a man of righteousness. This is hypocrisy. Although a man is not worthy of being honoured, he claims to be so. This is *Mana* (pride). There is false dignity. Although a man does not possess great things he superimposes them on himself. This is *Mada.*

These Asuras make impure resolves. "I will worship such and such a deity by repeating such and such a Mantra and get hold of such and such a woman. I will repeat such and such a Mantra and kill such and such a man."

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ।।११।।

चिन्ताम् cares, अपरिमेयाम् immeasurable, च and, प्रलयान्ताम् ending only with death, उपाश्रिताः refuged in, कामोपभोगपरमाः regarding gratification of lust as their highest aim, एतावत् that is all, इति thus, निश्चिताः feeling sure.

11. Giving themselves over to immeasurable cares ending only with death, regarding gratification of lust as their highest aim, and feeling sure that that is all,

Commentary: They are beset with immense cares, worries and anxieties and their minds are engrossed in acquiring and preserving the countless sensual objects. They have got the strong conviction that the sensual enjoyment is the highest end of a man. They are steeped in enjoying the objects of the senses. They firmly believe that that is everything. They believe that sensual enjoyment is the supreme source of happiness and there is no such thing as eternal bliss of the soul or transcendental bliss of the Self. They have no belief in the happiness in another world (or plane) or in the perennial bliss which is independent of sensual objects, which is beyond the reach of the senses. They have a dull and gross intellect, and so they cannot grasp the subtle higher truth. Sensual enjoyment is the greatest object of attainment for them.

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥१२॥

आशापाशशतैः by a hundred ties of hope, बद्धाः bound, कामक्रोधपरायणाः given over to lust and anger, ईहन्ते (they) strive (to attain), कामभोगार्थम् for sensual enjoyment, अन्यायेन by unlawful means, अर्थसञ्चयान् hoards of wealth.

12. Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they strive to obtain by unlawful means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyments.

Commentary: They murder people and rob them of their wealth in order to have sensual enjoyments. They amass wealth for sense-pleasure only, but not for doing righteous actions. They have no mercy. They are very cruel. They are held in bondage by a hundred ties of expectation. They harbour in their hearts a craving for all kinds of sensual objects. Various sorts of desires crop up in their mind. When their desires are not gratified they become furious. They acquire wealth by unjust means. Hope or expectation binds a man to the wheel of Samsara. Therefore hope is likened to a cord or a rope. There is no end to their cravings. Though they possess enormous wealth their cravings are not appeased. They multiply daily. These people become hopeless victims of greed.

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥१३॥

इदम् this, अद्य today, मया by me, लब्धम् has been gained, इमम् this, प्राप्स्ये (I) shall obtain, मनोरथम् desire, इदम् this, अस्ति is, इदम् this, अपि also, मे to me, भविष्यति shall be, पुनः again, धनम् wealth.

13. "This has been gained by me today; this desire of mine I shall fulfil; this is mine and this wealth also shall be mine in future."

Commentary: "I will be able to acquire all that the world possesses. Then I will be the lord of all wealth. No one will be equal to me on the surface of this earth."

In future: "Next year this wealth also shall be mine. I will be known to the world as a man of immense wealth. People will address me as *my lord.*"

These demons (who think like this) become self-conceited on account of their wealth. Their heads are swollen with pride. They regard everyone else as worthless as straw. Pride of wealth destroys their power of discrimination. They strive for happiness but they never obtain it. They are entangled in the meshes of Maya. They are wedded to sin and misery here and hereafter.

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।
ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ।।१४।।

असौ that, मया by me, हतः slain, शत्रुः enemy, हनिष्ये (I) shall slay, च and, अपरान् others, अपि also, ईश्वरः Lord, अहम् I, अहम् I, भोगी the enjoyer, सिद्धः perfect, अहम् I, बलवान् powerful, सुखी happy.

14. "That enemy has been slain by me; and others also I shall slay. I am the lord. I enjoy. I am perfect, powerful and happy."

Commentary: "I will be the lord of all I survey. I will kill everyone who will not serve me. In fact I am the lord of all creation. I will be successful in all my undertakings. I have got plenty of landed property, cattle and immense wealth. I have got plenty of children and grandchildren. Even Indra is not equal to me. I am not an ordinary man. I am very powerful, strong, healthy and happy in every respect."

In this verse there is a description of the vain imaginations of the people of demoniacal nature.

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ।।१५।।

आढ्यः rich, अभिजनवान् well-born, अस्मि (I) am, कः who, अन्यः else, अस्ति is, सदृशः equal, मया to me, यक्ष्ये (I) will sacrifice, दास्यामि (I) will give, मोदिष्ये (I) will rejoice, इति thus, अज्ञानविमोहिताः deluded by ignorance.

15. "I am rich and born in a noble family. Who else is equal to me? I shall perform sacrifices. I shall give (charity). I shall rejoice," thus deluded by ignorance,

Commentary: "Kubera (the god of wealth) may be wealthy, but he cannot be compared with me. Even Vishnu Himself does not possess the wealth that I possess. In comparison with my illustrious family and the extent of my relations even Brahma is indeed of inferior descent. They are as nothing when compared with me. Who then is there in the whole world equal to me?"

Well-born: Born in a family learned in the scriptures for seven generations: "None is equal to me in this respect. I will do many sacrificial rites to get name and fame. None is equal to me in this respect also. I will give money and presents to those who entertain me with dance, music and songs in praise of me. None is equal to me in charity (giving) also. I will indulge in eating, drinking and women.

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥१६॥

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ताः bewildered by many a fancy, मोहजालसमावृताः entangled in the snare of delusion, प्रसक्ताः addicted, कामभोगेषु to the gratification of lust, पतन्ति (they) fall, नरके into hell, अशुचौ foul.

16. Bewildered by many a fancy, entangled in the snare of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall into a foul hell.

Commentary: Just as a man utters many incoherent words when he gets into delirium or high fever, so also these diabolical men prattle about their desires, sensual enjoyment, etc. They commit countless sins and so they fall into a foul hell such as the Vaitarani. Delusion is a snare because those who are deluded are entrapped. They are caught like fish in the meshes of the net of delusion. They are enveloped by the net on four sides. They are bewildered as to what to do first and what next. As they are enveloped or covered by delusion, they are bewildered in various ways by entertaining various evil thoughts. They have no discrimination between the proper or beneficial and improper or harmful Sadhanas. The lack of the knowledge of the distinction between these two is *Moha*. As Moha is a veil and a cause of bondage it is compared to a net.

All the qualities mentioned above lead to downfall.

आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ।।१७।।

आत्मसम्भाविताः self-conceited, स्तब्धाः stubborn, धनमानमदान्वताः filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, यजन्ते (they) perform, नामयज्ञैः sacrifices in name, ते they, दम्भेन out of ostentation, अविधिपूर्वकम् contrary to scriptural ordinances.

17. Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices in name out of ostentation, contrary to scriptural ordinances.

Commentary: They are puffed up with unbounded pride. They esteem themselves very highly. They are not esteemed or honoured as such by the righteous or pious persons. They have a very high opinion of their own greatness. They esteem themselves as possessed of all the virtuous attributes. They are not humble. They have no humility or meekness. Their minds are entirely filled with a sense of their own importance. They treat others with contempt. They think that others are inferior to them. They never bend their heads and make prostrations to elders or superiors or spiritual teachers and monks. They stand erect like a pillar or iron post, intoxicated as they are with the wine of wealth. They pretend to perform Yajnas.

They do not care for an altar, a sacrificial bower or a receptacle for the fire, or any of the proper materials to be used in the sacrifices. They do not pay any attention to the prescribed rules. They do sacrifices in order to increase their own fame. They will not hear even the mentioning of the name of God or Brahmana. How can God or a Brahmana attend their sacrifices?

They perform sacrifices without paying attention to the several parts of them and the obligations enjoined in the scriptural ordinances such as the recitation of the Mantras, worship of the gods, giving of the fees, etc. They will not do the sacrifices with reverence and faith. They want that all the people should say that they are Somayajis (performers of the Soma sacrifice). They will not attain the fruits of the sacrifice. There is no idea of service in them. They perform sacrifice to deceive the world, but not out of sincerity and faith.

Mana: Pride consists in supposing oneself worthy of a high honour (on account of one's wealth or learning, etc.).

Mada: On account of intoxication of wealth the wealthy man treats the Guru and other persons who are worthy of being honoured, with contempt. Wealth and learning turn their heads. This is Mada.

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ।।१८।।

अहङ्कारम् egoism, बलम् power, दर्पम् haughtiness, कामम् lust, क्रोधम् anger, च and, संश्रिताः possessed of, माम् Me, आत्मपरदेहेषु in their own bodies and in those of others, प्रद्विषन्तः hating, अभ्यसूयकाः (these) malicious people.

18. Given over to egoism, power, haughtiness, lust and anger, these malicious people hate Me in their own bodies and in those of others.

Commentary: They are self-sufficient and puffed up with mental and material power. They pose too much. They resent it much if they are belittled. The body is dearer to them than everything else. They live solely for it. If anybody tries to thwart their plans or schemes they become bitterly hostile towards him. They take vengeance on him and try to kill him mercilessly. They are extremely mean-minded. Just as darkness seems to be denser after night sets in, so also as their folly increases, their arrogance grows, their egoism develops, their pride swells, and their delusion augments day by day. They use brutal force to gain their selfish ends. They abuse and ill-treat all those people who are truthful and charitable, and who are devoted to Me.

Ahamkaram: Egoism: The self-arrogating principle, the effect or modification of ignorance. This is the source of all the defects and perversities in human nature and of all evil actions. Lust, anger, greed, pride and hypocrisy are all attendants of egoism. It is very difficult to overcome this dire enemy, but through Vichara (right enquiry) it can be annihilated.

These Asuras who are very egoistic on account of their deep ignorance esteem themselves very highly for the qualities they possess and for those which they falsely superimpose upon themselves. They think that they are very great persons on account of the good qualities which they have superimposed upon themselves and their egoism is increased thereby. They try to humiliate others by using their financial supremacy. They will bribe people to give false evidence and do anything to attain their selfish ends.

Balam: Power accompanied by lust and attachment. The Asuras use their strength of body to humiliate and destroy others. If a man is not established in Yama (the fivefold canon of ethical perfection, consisting of non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-covetousness), if he has no purity of heart, if his mind is surcharged or saturated with evil tendencies, and if he gets power of any sort, he will misuse or abuse it and try to humiliate or abuse others. Powers or Siddhis are bound to come if one practises concentration of mind. If he is endowed with Yama, he will never misuse them and so he will never have a downfall. That is the reason why Patanjali Maharshi says: "Powers are obstacles on the path of Yoga. Shun them ruthlessly. March onwards to the goal. Climb the ladder of Yoga till you attain the highest state of superconsciousness or God-consciousness." Do not look back. Have no memories of the past.

Yama is the very foundation of Yoga. Get yourself established in Yama before you take to concentration and meditation. Many aspirants get a downfall because they do not practise Yama to begin with. They jump at once to the practice of concentration and meditation. This is a sad mistake.

Darpa: Haughtiness. A man whose heart is filled with haughtiness becomes very insolent and unjust and assumes an overbearing and domineering attitude towards others; he never respects the elders, Gurus and others. This is a peculiar vice that has its seat in the mind. When this evil quality manifests itself, one swerves from the path of virtue.

Krodha: Anger manifests itself when one gets something unpleasant and when he comes across something disagreeable.

These Asuras hate Me, the Lord Who dwells in their own bodies as the silent witness of their thoughts and actions. They think that I am also a human being and hate Me. They do not understand My all-pervading and imperishable nature. They do not care at all to know and follow My commands or the injunctions given in the Vedas and the Smritis. If anyone violates My commands given in the scriptures, it is surely tantamount to an act of hatred towards Me. These people are very malicious. They have evil intentions or impure motives. They are jealous of those persons who are virtuous and who tread the path of righteousness. Their hearts burn when they notice good qualities in others. This is Matsarya, a form of jealousy. If a man superimposes evil qualities on a virtuous man who is endowed with good qualities, this is Asuya. If his heart burns when he sees a wealthy or prosperous man, this is Irshya.

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥१९॥

तान् those, अहम् I, द्विषतः (the) hating (ones), क्रूरान् cruel, संसारेषु in the worlds, नराधमान् worst among men, क्षिपामि (I) hurl, अजस्रम् for ever, अशुभान् evil-doers, आसुरीषु of demons, एव only, योनिषु in wombs.

19. Those cruel haters, worst among men in the world, I hurl those evil-doers into the wombs of demons only.

Commentary: Now listen to the manner in which I deal with all these demoniacal persons who injure people and who take delight in killing people and animals and who hate Me, the indweller of all bodies. I deprive them of their human state and reduce them to a lower condition as subhuman creatures. I hurl them into the wombs of the most cruel beings such as tigers, lions, scorpions, snakes and the like. 'For ever' only means 'till they purify their hearts'. There is no such thing as eternal damnation.

Tan: Those: The enemies of those who tread the path of righteousness and the haters of virtuous persons.

Naradhaman: Worst among men because they are guilty of the worst evil deeds and they take delight in injuring virtuous persons and in killing persons and animals ruthlessly.

Asurishu yonishu: Wombs of Asuras: Wombs of the most cruel beings such as tigers, lions and the like.

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥२०॥

आसुरीम् demoniacal, योनिम् womb, आपन्नाः entering into, मूढाः deluded, जन्मनि जन्मनि in birth after birth, माम् Me, अप्राप्य not attaining, एव still, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti (Arjuna), ततः than that, यान्ति (they) fall into, अधमाम् lower, गतिम् condition (path or goal).

20. Entering into demoniacal wombs and deluded, birth after birth, not attaining Me, they thus fall, O Arjuna, into a condition still lower than that.

Commentary: These degraded Asuras are cast into the demoniacal wombs. They are reduced to the very lowest condition or the most appalling state. They are cast into utter darkness. They fall into lower and yet lower wombs in response to their own satanic desires and actions and their extreme Tamasic nature. From the birth of a tiger, they will get the birth of a serpent; from a serpent's they will get the birth of a worm; from that they will get the birth of a tree, etc. In Sanskrit the suffix *Tara* denotes comparative degree and *Tama* is superlative degree. These people get *Nikrishtatama Yonis* (the lowest wombs).

They do not reach Me as their minds are filled with impurities, as they do not tread the path of righteousness in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures. The diabolical nature is inimical to spiritual progress. Therefore, you will have to annihilate the evil tendencies by cultivating divine qualities and the practice of regular meditation. Then and only then will you attain liberation.

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥२१॥

त्रिविधम् triple, नरकस्य of hell, इदम् this, द्वारम् gate, नाशनम् destructive, आत्मनः of the self, कामः lust, क्रोधः anger, तथा also, लोभः greed, तस्मात् therefore, एतत् this, त्रयम् three, त्यजेत् (one) should abandon.

21. Triple is the gate of this hell, destructive of the self—lust, anger and greed; therefore one should abandon these three.

Commentary: *Lust, anger* and *greed,*—these highway robbers will cause a man to fall into the dark abyss of hell, misery or grief. These are the three fountain-heads of misery. These three constitute the gateway leading to the lowest of hells. These are the enemies of peace, devotion and knowledge. When these evil modifications of the mind arise in it, man loses his balance or poise and discrimination and commits various evil actions.

Lust, anger and greed denote self-blindness and ignorance, for there are no Vasanas, wants, anger, or greed in Brahman or the pure immortal Self.

Narakasya dvaram: The gate to hell: The gate leading to hell. The self is destroyed by merely entering at the gate, i.e., it is not fit to do any right exertion to attain the goal of life.

As this gate causes self-destruction, let everyone renounce these three. (*Cf.* III. 47)

In the next verse the man who has abandoned these three evils is highly eulogised.

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२२॥

एतैः from these, विमुक्तः liberated, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, तमोद्वारैः gates to darkness, त्रिभिः (by) three, नरः the man, आचरति practises, आत्मनः for him, श्रेयः what is good, ततः and then, याति goes to, पराम् the Supreme, गतिम् Goal.

22. A man who is liberated from these three gates to darkness, O Arjuna, practises what is good for him and thus goes to the Supreme Goal.

Commentary: When these gates to hell are abandoned, the path to salvation is made clear for the aspirant. He gets the company of sages, which leads to liberation. He gets spiritual instructions and practises them. He hears the scriptures, reflects, meditates and attains Self-realisation.

Tamodvara: Gate to darkness leading to hell which is full of pain and delusion.

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ।।२३।।

यः who, शास्त्रविधिम् the ordinance of the scriptures, उत्सृज्य having cast aside, वर्तते acts, कामकारतः under the impulse of desire, न not, सः he, सिद्धिम् perfection, अवाप्नोति attains, न not, सुखम् happiness, न not, पराम् Supreme, गतिम् Goal.

23. He who, having cast aside the ordinances of the scriptures, acts under the impulse of desire, attains not perfection, nor happiness nor the Supreme Goal.

Commentary: "He who does not care for the Self, who gives free rein to these three sins, is a traitor to the Self." He who has renounced the authority of the Vedas which, like a mother, is equally disposed and kind to all, and which, like a beaconlight, points out what is good and what is evil, does not attain perfection nor happiness nor the Supreme Goal. He who pays no attention to prescribed actions and follows the promptings of desire awakened by the senses, does not obtain God.

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ।।२४।।

तस्मात् therefore, शास्त्रम् scripture, प्रमाणम् (be) authority, ते they, कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, ज्ञात्वा having known, शास्त्रविधानोक्तम् what is said in the ordinance of the scriptures, कर्म action, कर्तुम् to do, इह here (in this world), अर्हसि shouldst.

24. Therefore, let the scripture be thy authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinance of the scriptures, thou shouldst act here in this world.

Commentary: He who desires the welfare of the Self should not disregard the commands of the scriptures. A man who is anxious to obtain eternal bliss should respect the Vedas and the Smritis which lay down the code of right conduct. He should readily renounce whatever the scriptures teach him to abandon and accept whatever he is directed to accept.

He who is thus entirely devoted to the Vedas cannot meet with misfortune, grief or delusion. No mother is more kind than the scriptures for they restrain us from doing evil and bestow on us the greatest good (liberation or Moksha). Therefore treat the scriptures with great respect. Renounce all that the scriptures prohibit. Whatever is worthy of being done, that thou shouldst do thoroughly with all thy heart and all thy strength.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगो नाम षोडशोऽध्यायः॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the sixteenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Division Between
The Divine and the Demoniacal.

अथ सप्तदशोऽध्यायः

SEVENTEENTH DISCOURSE

श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगः

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREEFOLD FAITH

अर्जुन उवाच

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥१॥

ये who, शास्त्रविधिम् the ordinances of the scriptures, उत्सृज्य setting aside, यजन्ते perform sacrifice, श्रद्धया with faith, अन्विताः endowed, तेषाम् their, निष्ठा condition, तु verily, का what, कृष्ण O Krishna, सत्त्वम् Sattva, आहो or, रजः Rajas, तमः Tamas.

Arjuna said:

1. Those who, setting aside the ordinances of the scriptures, perform sacrifice with faith, what is their condition, O Krishna? Is it Sattva, Rajas or Tamas?

Commentary: This chapter deals with the three kinds of people who are endowed with three kinds of faith. Each of them follows a path in accordance with his inherent nature—either Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic.

Arjuna says to Krishna: "It is very difficult to grasp the meaning of the scriptures. It is still more difficult to get a spiritual preceptor who can teach the scriptures. The vast majority of persons are not endowed with a pure, subtle, sharp and one-pointed intellect. The span of life is short. The scriptures are endless. The obstacles on the spiritual path are many. Facilities for learning are not always available. There are conflicting statements in the scriptures which have to be reconciled. Thou hast said that liberation is not possible without a knowledge of the scriptures. An ordinary man, though ignorant of or unable to follow this teaching, does charity, performs rituals, worships the Lord with faith, tries to follow the footsteps of sages and saints just as a child copies letters that have been written out for him as a model, or as a blind man makes his way by the aid of another who possesses sight. What faith is his? How should the state of such a man be described—Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic? What is the fate of the believers who have no knowledge of the scriptures?"

श्री भगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ।।२।।

त्रिविधा threefold, भवति is, श्रद्धा faith, देहिनाम् of the embodied, सा that (faith), स्वभावजा (is) inherent in (their) nature, सात्त्विकी Sattvic (pure), राजसी Rajasic (passionate), च and, एव even, तामसी Tamasic (dark), च and, इति thus, ताम् it, शृणु hear (thou).

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Threefold is the faith of the embodied, which is inherent in their nature—the Sattvic (pure), the Rajasic (passionate) and the Tamasic (dark). Do thou hear of it.

Commentary: The whole world is made up, as it were, of faith. Faith assumes a threefold aspect under the influence of the three qualities. When Sattva is strongly developed, when there is a preponderance of Sattva or purity in a man, it is easy for him to attain Self-realisation or the knowledge of the Self. If Rajas is predominant, the faith becomes the handmaid of activity. If Tamas or inertia prevails, faith is annihilated.

Those who are endowed with Sattvic faith aim at the attainment of liberation. Those who are endowed with Rajasic faith run after inferior duties or worldly activities. Those whose faith is Tamasic are cruel. They kill animals for sacrifice. They invoke the spirits and talk with ghosts. When faith is joined to Sattva, it leads to salvation. When Rajas preponderates, it colours the faith and leads to various activities. When Tamas predominates, the faith results in darkness.

Faith acquires different qualities when it is in company with the mind of man. Mind is a thing of many colours. Just as the water of the Ganga is contaminated by being put in a vessel where liquor had been kept, so also a virtuous person is spoiled by bad company or constant association with evil persons. The three Gunas or attributes colour the faith of a man. The mind of a man is governed by the preponderating attribute or quality which manifests itself when the other two qualities are suppressed. Faith takes a threefold aspect in accordance with the inherent nature or tendencies of the man. The inclinations of men are moulded according to their quality or inherent nature born of their past Samskaras.

As is the tendency, so is the desire; as is the desire, so is the action; as is the action, so is the birth into another being after death. The body is like the seed of the tree, a perpetual chain. Seed perishes in developing into a tree and the tree again produces the seed. This process or cycle continues eternally. Even so man takes a body, does actions, develops tendencies, dies and puts on a new body in accordance with the nature or tendencies. This continues till he gets knowledge of the Self by transcending the three Gunas, when ignorance, the root cause of birth and death, is destroyed.

Faith is born of the individual nature, i.e., the Samskaras or the latent impressions of virtuous and vicious actions which were performed in the past births and which manifested themselves at the time of death. In the subconscious mind or the Chitta there is a reservoir of past impressions which are revived through the operation of memory.

Sattvic: Faith in the worship of gods, which is an effect of Sattva.

Rajasic: Faith in the worship of the Yakshas and Rakshasas, which is an effect of Rajas.

Tamasic: Faith in the worship of the disembodied spirits and ghosts, which is an effect of Tamas.

Faith is the main support of life. It is not mere intellectual belief or blind acceptance of pet dogmas or doctrines. You must understand clearly its characteristics, just as you recognise a tree from the fruits, the mind of a man from his speech, and the actions of previous birth from worldly pleasures and pains.

Svabhavaja: Inherent in their nature; born of past Samskaras.

Tam: Of it, referring to the threefold faith.

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥३॥

सत्त्वानुरूपा in accordance with his nature, सर्वस्य of each, श्रद्धा faith, भवति is, भारत O Arjuna, श्रद्धामयः consists of (his) faith, अयम् this, पुरुषः man, यः who, यच्छ्रद्धः in which his faith is, सः he, एव verily, सः that (is).

3. The faith of each is in accordance with his nature, O Arjuna. The man consists of his faith; as a man's faith is, so is he.

Commentary: The faith of every person conforms to his inherent nature or natural temperament. Man is imbued with faith. The term *Svabhava* in the last verse and the word *Sattva* in the present one are synonymous.

A man's character may be judged by his faith. A man's faith shows what his character is. A man is what his faith has made him. A man's conduct in life is moulded or shaped by his faith. His faith will indicate his Nishtha (state of being, conviction). The faith of each man is according to his natural disposition or the specific tendencies or Samskaras or the self-reproductive latent impressions of the good and bad actions which were performed in the past births. The faith of each man takes its colour and quality from the stuff of his being, his temperament, tendencies or Samskaras.

Sattva: Nature: Natural disposition; the mind with its specific tendencies.

Each: Every living being.

Purusha: Man: The individual soul which is caught up in the wheel of transmigration; the soul qualified by mind.

Sraddhamayah: Full of faith: Just as the Annamaya Kosa is full of food, just as the Anandamaya Kosa is full of bliss, so also the Antahkarana (mind, intellect, etc.) is full of faith.

"The man consists of his faith; that which his faith is, he is verily that." This theory is only a repetition of the theory propounded in chapter VII, verses 20 and 23, and in chapter IX, verse 25.

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥४॥

यजन्ते worship, सात्त्विकाः the Sattvic or pure men, देवान् the gods, यक्षरक्षांसि the Yakshas and the Rakshasas, राजसाः the Rajasic or the passionate, प्रेतान् ghosts, भूतगणान् the hosts of Bhutas or the nature-spirits, च and, अन्ये the others, यजन्ते worship, तामसाः the Tamasic, जनाः people.

4. The Sattvic or the pure men worship the gods; the Rajasic or the passionate worship the Yakshas and the Rakshasas; the others (the Tamasic or the deluded people) worship the ghosts and the hosts of the nature-spirits.

Commentary: Lord Krishna, after defining faith, tells Arjuna how this faith determines the object of worship. The nature of the faith (whether it is Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic) has to be inferred from its characteristic effects, viz., the worship of the gods and the like. Each man selects his object of worship according to the ruling Guna of his being. The expression of a man's faith depends on the Guna that is predominant in him. A Sattvic man will give his faith the Sattvic expression, a Rajasic man the Rajasic expression and a Tamasic man the Tamasic expression.

Sattvic persons or people with Sattvic faith who are devoted to the worship of the gods, are rare in this world.

Yakshas are the brothers of Kubera, the lord of wealth; gnomes, the spirits that guard wealth.

Rakshasas: Beings of strength and power such as Nairrita; demons; giants gifted with illusive powers.

Bhutas: Ghosts.

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः ॥५॥

अशास्त्रविहितम् not enjoined by the scriptures, घोरम् terrific, तप्यन्ते practise, ये who, तपः austerity, जनाः men, दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः given to hypocrisy and egoism, कामरागबलान्विताः by the force of lust and attachment.

5. Those men who practise terrific austerities not enjoined by the scriptures, given to hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by the force of lust and attachment,

Commentary: There are some who think that the mortification of the body is the proper means to attain the goal of life. They do this in order to attract the people and get money for the gratification of their senses. They stand on one leg with raised hands. This is not real Tapas. This is Tamasic Tapas. Bodily torture will not bring emancipation. These men are not acquainted with even the first elements of the scriptures. They mock at the religious practices of the wise, elderly persons and jeer at learned men. They are puffed up with the vanity of their own greatness. They are proud of their wealth. They perform unauthorised austerities. These persons do severe austerities contrary to the scriptures on the strength of desire and attachment.

They take even the lives of children to propitiate their deity. Instead of killing their egoism, they kill many innocent animals in the name of sacrifice; but in reality they kill them to satisfy their own palate. Most horrible indeed! They speak ill of the scriptures and wander about in the forest of delusion and infatuation. They follow the dictates of passion. They inflict pain on themselves and on others. They practise austerities which cause pain to themselves and to other living beings. Pitiable indeed is their lot. They are doomed to destruction.

Kamaragabalanvitah may also be interpreted as "possessed of lust, attachment and power."

Dambha: Ostentation: The man of Dambha is desirous that all people should take him for a virtuous man and so he expresses to others his righteous nature. In reality he is not virtuous. He pretends to be what he is not.

Ahankara: Egoism: The egoistic man thinks and feels that he is superior to others in the possession of all virtuous qualities.

Raga: Extreme attachment to sensual objects.

Bala: Great power of enduring severe pain on account of Raga for sensual objects (pain that accrues from exertion in attaining and preserving the objects).

Kama: Lust: Desire for any object.

कर्शयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः ।
मां चैवान्तः शरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान् ॥६॥

कर्शयन्तः torturing, शरीरस्थम् dwelling in the body, भूतग्रामम् all the elements, अचेतसः senseless, माम् Me, च and, एव even, अन्तःशरीरस्थम् who dwells in the body within, तान् them, विद्धि know, आसुरनिश्चयान् to be of demoniac resolves.

6. Senseless, torturing all the elements in the body and Me also, Who dwell in the body,—know thou these to be of demoniacal resolves.

Commentary: *Bhutagramam:* The aggregate of all the elements composing the body.

Elements: Organs.

Mam: Me: Vaasudeva, the witness of their thoughts and deeds.

He who thus tortures Me disregards My teachings entirely.

Achetasah: Senseless, unintelligent, having no discrimination.

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥७॥

आहारः food, तु indeed, अपि also, सर्वस्य of all, त्रिविधः threefold, भवति is, प्रियः dear, यज्ञः sacrifice, तपः austerity, तथा also, दानम् almsgiving, तेषाम् their, भेदम् distinction, इमम् this, शृणु hear.

7. The food also which is dear to each is threefold, as also sacrifice, austerity and almsgiving. Hear thou the distinction of these.

Commentary: *Each:* Every being that eats.

Imam: This: That which is going to be described.

Tesham: Their: Of food, etc.

According to the Gunas, a man's taste for a particular food is determined. There are three kinds of food that a man can eat.

All foods have different properties. Different foods exercise different effects on different compartments of the brain or the mind. A confection of sparrow, meat, fish, eggs, onion and garlic excites passion. Fruits, barley, etc., render the mind calm and serene. The nature of food greatly influences the being of a man. Man feels a desire for particular foods according to his Guna or temperament.

The body is the instrument by which man accomplishes all his purposes in the world. It is the horse that takes him to his destination or goal (Moksha). Therefore it should be kept clean, strong and healthy. The body is a mould prepared by the mind for its activities. There is an intimate connection between the body and the mind. The nature and condition of the body has a vital effect upon the mind and activities. Therefore the materials or foods that build the body and the mind should be pure, wholesome, nutritious, substantial and bland.

Everything in this world is threefold. The food is either Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic according to its character and effect upon the body and the mind. You can find out the nature or temperament of a man from the nature of the food he takes. You can find out your own nature, whether you are Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic, from your predilection to particular food and then abandon the Rajasic and the Tamasic foodstuffs and take to the Sattvic diet.

Why is there also a triple division in sacrifice, austerity and charity? Because this threefold division is according to the nature of the Gunas. You can find out and abandon the Rajasic and the Tamasic ones and take recourse exclusively to the Sattvic ones.

The practice of Krichhra and Chandrayana Vratas that produce emaciation of the body and the senses is austerity. Tapas means meditation also. It produces Brahmatejas or divine splendour and glow on the face.

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥८॥

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः those which increase Ayus (life), Sattva (purity), Bala (strength), Arogya (health), Sukha (joy), Priti (cheerfulness and good appetite), रस्याः savoury, स्निग्धाः oleaginous, स्थिराः substantial, हृद्याः agreeable, आहाराः the foods, सात्त्विकप्रियाः are dear to Sattvic (pure).

8. The foods which increase life, purity, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness (good appetite), which are savoury and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are dear to the Sattvic (pure) people.

Commentary: Pure food increases the vitality and strength of those who eat it. It augments the energy of the mind also.

Sattva: Cheerfulness; purity; inner, moral and spiritual strength and courage that keep the mind steady even in great distress.

Bala: Strength; absence of fatigue even in doing difficult work.

Priti: Absence of retching; good appetite.

Rasyah: Sweet and juicy.

Sthirah: Substantial; which can last long in the body; vitalising but not difficult to digest.

Hridyah: The mere sight of the food is very pleasing to the mind and it is free from odour of smoke or burnt condition.

Sattvic food produces cheerfulness, serenity and mental clarity and helps the aspirants to enter into deep meditation and maintain mental poise and nervous equilibrium. It supplies the maximum energy to the body and the mind. It is very easily assimilated and absorbed.

A Sattvic man relishes juicy food and other foods which are attractive in form, soft to touch and pleasant to taste, which are small in bulk but great in nourishment like the words from the lips of a spiritual preceptor. Sattvic food is highly conducive to health.

Eat that food which will develop Sattva in you. Milk, butter, fresh, ripe fruits, almonds, green Dal, barley, Parwal, Torai, Karela, plantains, etc., are Sattvic. Abandon fish, meat, liquors, eggs, etc., ruthlessly if you want to increase Sattva and attain Self-realisation. The mind is formed of the subtle portion of the food. "जैसा अन्न वैसा मन As is the food so is the mind" says a Hindi proverb. If you take Sattvic food, the mind also will be Sattvic. The seven elements (Dhatus) of the body (chyle, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen) are formed out of food.

Ideas or concepts are generated in the mind corresponding to these seven elements. As is the constitution of these elements, so is the constitution of the mind. Just as water is rendered hot when the pot that contains it is placed over the fire, so also the nature and constitution of the mind is according to the nature and constitution of the food or the seven elements.

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥९॥

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः those that are bitter, sour, saline, excessively hot, pungent, dry and burning, आहाराः foods, राजसस्य of the Rajasic, इष्टाः are liked, दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः are productive of pain, grief and disease.

9. The foods that are bitter, sour, saline, excessively hot, pungent, dry and burning, are liked by the Rajasic and are productive of pain, grief and disease. .

Commentary: *Excessively:* This qualification should be taken to apply to each of the seven qualities—thus, excessively saline, and so on.

Food of a passionate nature produces restlessness in the mind, evil thoughts, excitement, craving now for one thing and then for another, pain, trouble and disease. The Rajasic man always plans to prepare various kinds of preparations to satisfy his palate. He takes salt, chillies, mustard, cloves, condiments, pungent pickles, etc., in excess. Tears flow from his eyes and water dribbles from his nose and yet he will not leave the hot and pungent articles. The palate remains unsatisfied until the stomach is completely filled with pungent things, till the tongue is burnt with chillies. Lady's-finger, Puri, Kachori, pungent condiments, meat, fish, eggs, sweets, potato, fried bread, curd, brinjal, carrots, blackgram, onions, garlic, lemon, Masur, tea, coffee, betels, tobacco are Rajasic articles of food.

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥१०॥

यातयामम् stale, गतरसम् tasteless, पूति putrid, पर्युषितम् rotten, च and, यत् which, उच्छिष्टम् refuse, अपि also, च and, अमेध्यम् impure, भोजनम् food, तामसप्रियम् liked by the Tamasic.

10. That which is stale, tasteless, putrid, rotten, refuse and impure, is the food liked by the Tamasic.

Commentary: Cannabis indica (Ganja), Bhang, opium, cocaine, Charas, Chandoo, all stale and putrid articles, are Tamasic.

Yatayamam: Stale, literally means 'cooked three hours ago'. *Yatayamam* and *Gatarasam* mean the same thing.

Paryushitam: Rotten: The cooked food which has been kept overnight.

Uchchishtam: What is left on the plate after a meal.

The man whose taste is of a Tamasic nature will eat food in the afternoon that has been cooked on the previous day. He also likes that which is half-cooked or burnt to a cinder. He and all the members of his family sit together and eat from the same dish or plate, food that has been mixed into a mess by his children.

The food eaten by Tamasic people is stale, dry, without juice, unripe or overcooked. They do not relish it, till it begins to rot and ferment. They take prohibited foods and drinks. They take liquors, fermented toddy, etc. They are horrible people with devilish tendencies.

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥११॥

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिः by men desiring no fruit, यज्ञः sacrifice, विधिदृष्टः as enjoined by the ordinance, यः which, इज्यते is offered, यष्टव्यम् ought to be offered, एव only, इति thus, मनः the mind, समाधाय having fixed, सः that, सात्त्विकः Sattvic or pure.

11. That sacrifice which is offered by men without desire for reward as enjoined by the ordinance (scripture), with a firm faith that to do so is a duty, is Sattvic or pure.

Commentary: When a sacrifice is done with all due Sattvic rites, faith and devotion, without the least taint of desire for reward, with the mind fixed on the sacrifice only, for its own sake (for the sake of discharging the duty only), then it is said to be pure in its nature. Here the sacrifice is done in a disinterested spirit or with an attitude of desirelessness (Nishkamya Bhava) as an auxiliary to the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. Such selfless and desireless actions purify the mind and prepare the aspirant for the reception of divine light or knowledge of the Self. The Sattvic nature of a man forces him to do such selfless and desireless sacrifices. He does not care even for his own emancipation. He performs them with the firm belief that they ought to be done. He does them with the firm resolve that sacrifice is a duty.

Yajna here is not limited to the ceremonial sacrifice. It is used in a broad sense. Any unselfish action done without attachment, without agency or egoism and without expectation of reward, as an offering unto the Lord, is a Yajna or sacrifice.

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥१२॥

अभिसंधाय seeking for, तु indeed, फलम् fruit, दम्भार्थम् for ostentation, अपि also, च and, एव even, यत् which, इज्यते is offered, भरतश्रेष्ठ O best of the Bharatas, तम् that, यज्ञम् sacrifice, विद्धि know, राजसम् Rajasic.

12. The sacrifice which is offered, O Arjuna, seeking a reward and for ostentation, know thou that to be a Rajasic Yajna.

Commentary: If anyone performs a sacrifice in order to obtain heaven, son, wealth or name and fame, then it is a sacrifice of a Rajasic nature. The performer of this kind of sacrifice has the motive of increasing his own importance, for popularising his own name in the world, for gaining some reward, for showing himself off as a great, pious and learned man, for making an exhibition of his riches for his own glorification. He has no aspiration for attaining the knowledge of the Self.

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।
श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ।।१३।।

विधिहीनम् without keeping to ordinance, असृष्टान्नम् in which no food is distributed, मन्त्रहीनम् which is devoid of Mantras, अदक्षिणम् which is devoid of gifts, श्रद्धाविरहितम् which is devoid of faith, यज्ञम् sacrifice, तामसम् Tamasic, परिचक्षते (they) declare.

13. They declare that sacrifice to be Tamasic which is contrary to the ordinances of the scriptures, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of Mantras, gifts and faith.

Commentary: A sacrifice performed by a Tamasic man is never guided by any consideration for the prescribed rites or incantation. You will find every irregularity in this sacrifice. No food is distributed. No fees which are prescribed in the scriptures are given to the priests. The Mantras are not chanted properly. The hymns recited are defective in utterance and accent. Sometimes there is no recitation at all. There is no faith. A man who performs such a sacrifice does not get any merit.

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ।।१४।।

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनम् worship of the gods, the twice-born, the teachers and the wise, शौचम् purity, आर्जवम् straightforwardness, ब्रह्मचर्यम् celibacy, अहिंसा non-injury, च and, शारीरम् of the body, तपः austerity, उच्यते is called.

14. Worship of the gods, the twice-born, the teachers and the wise, purity, straightforwardness, celibacy and non-injury are called the austerities of the body.

Commentary: *Tapas:* Austerity or self-discipline.

Using the feet in pilgrimage to the sacred temples; using the hands in cleaning the temples, in collecting the materials of worship of God, and in performing worship; prostrations to the Brahmanas, preceptors and the wise; continence and non-injury, constitute physical austerity. The body is used in the service of the parents and preceptors, the poor and the sick. This is also bodily austerity. That austerity which is done by the body is physical austerity. The physical body is the chief agent in doing such austerity. Hence this is called physical austerity. The practice of non-stealing and non-covetousness are also included in physical austerity.

He who has realised "I am Brahman" is a wise man *(Prajna)*. A Sudra also may be a wise man. Though Vidura was a Sudra he was a sage. That is the reason why the Lord has made a separate mention of the wise.

Brahmacharya means control but not suppression of the sex-desire or sex-force. If the mind is filled with sublime thoughts by meditation, Japa (repetition of a Mantra), prayer, study of holy scriptures, enquiry of 'Who am I?', and contemplation of the sexless, pure Self, the sex-desire will be devitalised by the withdrawal of the mind. The mind also will be thinned out. Suppressed sex-desire will attack you again and again and will produce wet-dreams, irritability and restlessness of the mind. The mind should be rendered pure by meditation, Japa, singing of the Lord's names, and prayer. The mind should be controlled first. Then it will be easy for you to control the senses. That is the reason why the practice of Sama or the control of the mind comes first and then comes Dama or the restraint of the senses (in the order of the sixfold virtues—*see page 58*). The senses cannot operate without the help of the mind. So the effective remedy for lust and the best aid to celibacy is to control the mind first and then the senses.

Intense musing on the objects of the senses does more harm to the inner spiritual life than actual sense-gratification. If the mind is not rendered pure by Sadhana, mere mortification of the external senses will not produce the desired effect. Although the external senses are mortified, their internal counterparts which are still energetic and vigorous, revenge upon the mind, and produce intense mental disturbance and wild imagination.

To control the mind is difficult for neophytes or the beginners. It will be extremely difficult to control the mind first when the senses are allowed to run riot. That is the reason why Lord Krishna says: "Therefore, O Arjuna, mastering first the senses, do thou slay this thing of sin (desire), destructive of wisdom and knowledge." (*Cf.* III. 41)

The theory or doctrine that the mind should be controlled first is quite correct. This practice is intended for the first-class type of spiritual aspirants. The middling type of students should control the senses first. The senses always have an outgoing tendency. The mind operates through the senses. Control of the one goes hand in hand with control of the other. Control of the senses is also control of the mind, because the mind is a bundle of senses only; there is no mind without the senses.

Just as an enemy can be easily conquered if you have a two-pronged attack, so also the mind can be controlled easily if you attack it on two fronts simultaneously—an external attack on the senses and an internal attack on the mind itself by the eradication of the desires.

To say, "Control the mind first, you can control the senses" (which is one point of view) or "Control the senses first, you can control the mind easily" (which is another point of view) is simply arguing in a vicious circle like "Which came first—the tree or the seed?" or "You will get the knowledge of the Self if you control all desires—and you can control all the desires only if you have knowledge of the Self."

You need not worry yourself over this seeming paradox. Try to do either of the practices, viz., control of the mind or control of the senses, according to your liking, capacity, taste and temperament. You can yourself find out by actual practice which is better. As you advance in your practice your doubt will gradually disappear and you will enjoy supreme peace and joy.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ।।१५।।

अनुद्वेगकरम् causing no excitement, वाक्यम् speech, सत्यम् truthful, प्रियहितम् pleasant and beneficial, च and, यत् which, स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनम् the practice of the study of the Vedas, च and, एव also, वाङ्मयम् of speech, तपः austerity, उच्यते is called.

15. Speech which causes no excitement, truthful, pleasant and beneficial, the practice of the study of the Vedas, are called austerity of speech.

Commentary: The words of the man who practises the austerity of speech cannot cause pain to others. His words will bring cheer and solace to others. His words prove beneficial to all. The organ of speech causes great distraction of mind. Control of speech is a difficult discipline but you will have to practise it if you want to attain supreme peace. Nothing is impossible for a man who has a firm determination, sincerity of purpose, iron will, patience and perseverance.

It is said in Manu Smriti:

सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम् ।
प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयात् एष धर्मः सनातनः ।।

"One should speak what is true; one should speak what is pleasant. One should not speak what is true if it is not pleasant nor what is pleasant if it is false. This is the ancient Dharma."

Excitement: Pain to living beings.

Speech, to be an austerity, must form an invariable combination of all the four attributes mentioned in this verse, viz., non-exciting or non-painful, truthful, pleasant and beneficial; if it is wanting in one or the other of these attributes, it cannot form the austerity of speech. Speech may be pleasant but if it is lacking in the other three attributes, it will no longer be an austerity of speech.

मनःप्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ।।१६।।

मनःप्रसादः serenity of mind, सौम्यत्वम् good-heartedness, मौनम् silence, आत्मविनिग्रहः self-control, भावसंशुद्धिः purity of nature, इति thus, एतत् this, तपः austerity, मानसम् mental, उच्यते is called.

16. Serenity of mind, good-heartedness, self-control, purity of nature—this is called mental austerity.

Commentary: Just as a lake which is without a ripple on its surface is very tranquil, so also the mind which is free from modifications, from wandering thoughts of sensual objects, is quite serene and calm.

Saumyatvam: Intent on the welfare of all beings; the state of mind which may be inferred from its effects, such as brightness of the face, etc.

Maunam: Even silence of speech is necessarily preceded by the control of thought, and so the effect is here used to stand for the cause, viz., the control of thought: this is the result of the control of thought so far as it concerns speech, silence of the mind, ability to remain calm even amidst disturbing factors from without. Mauna is the condition of the *Muni* (sage), i.e., practice of meditation with one-pointedness of mind.

Atmavinigrahah: Self-control: A general control of the mind. Asamprajnata Samadhi wherein all the modifications of the mind are controlled. The mind cannot run after the senses and the senses cannot run after their objects. In Mauna there is control of thought so far as it concerns speech.

Bhavasamsuddhih: Purity of nature: Honesty of purpose; freedom from cunningness in dealing with other people; the pure state of the mind wherein there is absence of lust, anger, greed, etc.

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः ।
अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ।।१७।।

श्रद्धया with faith, परया highest, तप्तम् practised, तपः austerity, तत् that, त्रिविधम् threefold, नरैः by men, अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिः desiring no fruit, युक्तैः steadfast, सात्त्विकम् Sattvic, परिचक्षते (they) declare.

17. This threefold austerity, practised by steadfast men, with the utmost faith, desiring no reward, they call Sattvic.

Commentary: *Trividham:* Threefold—physical, vocal and mental.

Yuktaih: Steadfast: Balanced in mind, unaffected in success and failure

Sraddhaya: With faith: With belief in the existence of God, in the words of the preceptor, in the teachings of the scriptures and in one's own Self.

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् ।
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् ॥१८॥

सत्कारमानपूजार्थम् with the object of gaining good reception, honour and worship, तपः austerity, दम्भेन with hypocrisy, च and, एव even, यत् which, क्रियते is practised, तत् that, इह here, प्रोक्तम् is said, राजसम् Rajasic, चलम् unstable, अध्रुवम् transitory.

18. The austerity which is practised with the object of gaining good reception, honour and worship, and with hypocrisy, is here said to be Rajasic, unstable and transitory.

Commentary: Penance that is performed with no sincere belief, for mere show, with a view to increase self-importance, in order that the world may pay respect to the performer and place him in the seat of honour, and that everyone may sing his praise, is declared to be of a passionate nature.

Iha: In this world: Such penance yields fruit only in this world.

Satkara: Good reception with such words as, "Here is a good Brahmana of great austerities."

Mana: Honour: Rising from one's seat to greet, and saluting with reverence.

Chalam: Unstable: Yielding momentary effect or result.

Adhruvam: Without Niyama or fixity.

Penance that is performed in the hope of gaining fame is worse than useless. It bears no fruit. It is abandoned though incomplete, when it is seen that it can result in no gain.

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥१९॥

मूढग्राहेण out of a foolish notion, आत्मनः of the self, यत् which, पीडया with torture, क्रियते is practised, तपः austerity, परस्य of another, उत्सादनार्थम् for the purpose of destroying, वा or, तत् that, तामसम् Tamasic, उदाहृतम् is declared.

19. That austerity which is practised out of a foolish notion, with self-torture, or for the purpose of destroying another, is declared to be Tamasic.

Commentary: Some burn sulphur in a pot and place it on their head. Some thrust hooks of iron into their flesh. Some hang themselves with their head downwards over fire and swallow smoke. Some stand in cold water immersed up to the neck. Some torture the body by lighting fires on the four sides (with the sun as the fifth fire—this is known as the Panchagni Tapas). Some sit in the centre of a circle of fire. Such austerities are Tamasic. These will not help one to attain knowledge of the Self.

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥२०॥

दातव्यम् ought to be given, इति thus, यत् that, दानम् gift, दीयते is given, अनुपकारिणे to one who does no service (in return), देशे in a fit place, काले in time, च and, पात्रे to a worthy person, च and, तत् that, दानम् gift, सात्त्विकम् Sattvic, स्मृतम् is held to be.

20. That gift which is given to one who does nothing in return, knowing it to be a duty to give in a fit place and time to a worthy person, that gift is held to be Sattvic.

Commentary: The gift should be given to one who cannot return the good or to one from whom no such return is expected.

It is necessary to be in Kurukshetra or Varanasi or any part of the world that is equally sacred when one offers gifts. The time should be during solar or lunar eclipse or an equally auspicious occasion.

Worthy: A pious person who is a Tapasvin, who is well versed in the scriptures (the Vedas and the Vedangas), who is able to protect himself and the donor, etc.

At such a time and such a place there should be a person worthy to receive the gift. a person who is the very incarnation of purity, the very abode of good conduct. A gift may be freely given to such a highly deserving person. The donor should not boast of his charity.

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥२१॥

यत् which, तु indeed, प्रत्युपकारार्थम् with a view to receive in return, फलम् fruit, उद्दिश्य looking for, वा or, पुनः again, दीयते is given, च and, परिक्लिष्टम् reluctantly, तत् that, दानम् gift, राजसम् Rajasic, स्मृतम् is held to be.

21. And, that gift which is given with a view to receive something in return, or looking for a reward, or reluctantly, is held to be Rajasic.

Commentary: Charity or gift that is given in the hope that it will be returned in the future and praised in public or that the gift will bring some unseen reward or heavenly pleasure is passionate. If a man makes a gift to a Brahmana or a Sannyasin with the hope that all his sins will be washed away, this is also a Rajasic gift. If a man is grieved at heart after making the gift this is also a gift of passionate nature.

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

अदेशकाले at a wrong place and time, यत् which, दानम् gift, अपात्रेभ्यः to unworthy persons, च and, दीयते is given, असत्कृतम् without respect, अवज्ञातम् with insult, तत् that, तामसम् Tamasic, उदाहृतम् is declared to be.

22. The gift that is given at a wrong place and time, to unworthy persons, without respect or with insult is declared to be Tamasic.

Commentary: *Adesakale:* At a wrong place and time: At a place which is not holy, where irreligious people congregate and where beggars assemble, where wealth acquired through illegal means such as gambling, theft, etc., is distributed to gamblers, singers, fools, rogues, women of evil reputation and at a time which is not auspicious. But, this does not discourage giving alms or other charity to the poor and the needy. In their case these restrictions do not apply.

Without respect, etc.: Without pleasant speech, without the washing of feet or without worship, although the gift is made at a proper time and place.

The donor does not give in good faith although he gets a worthy recipient. He never bends his head in worship. He does not offer him a seat. He treats him with contempt or disrespect.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "I have described that faith, charity, austerity, food, etc., are invariably coloured by the three qualities. There was no desire on My part to refer to the lower ones; but to distinguish the highest purity it was necessary to point out the mark of the other two. When the two are set aside, the third is more clearly appreciated in the same way as if day and night are removed the twilight is seen better. Even so by avoiding passion and darkness, the third, viz., purity or Sattva becomes vividly clear and purity which is the best can be easily realised. Thus in order to show thee the real nature of purity, I have described the other two, so that laying them aside, and resorting to the highest thou mayest attain the goal, viz., Moksha."

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥२३॥

ॐ तत्सत् Om Tat Sat, इति thus, निर्देशः designation, ब्रह्मणः of Brahman, त्रिविधः threefold, स्मृतः has been declared, ब्राह्मणाः Brahmanas, तेन by that, वेदाः Vedas, च and, यज्ञाः sacrifices, च and, विहिताः created, पुरा formerly.

23. "Om Tat Sat": This has been declared to be the triple designation of Brahman. By that were created formerly, the Brahmanas, the Vedas and the sacrifices.

Commentary: *Om Tat Sat* is the root of the entire universe. *Om* is the Akshara Brahman. *Tat* means That, the indefinable. *Sat* means Reality.

Para Brahman, that Supreme Being, the abiding place of all that lives and moves, is beyond name and class. The Vedas have ventured to give a name to Him. A new-born child has no name but on receiving one he will answer to it. Men who are troubled by the afflictions of this world run to the Deity for refuge and call Him by the name. When Brahman is invoked through the name that which is hidden is revealed to the aspirant.

These three words have a divine power of their own. The vibrations that they produce in one are such as to arouse the latent divinity and also to secure the necessary response from the Cosmic Being Whom they connote.

When a sacrificial rite or the like is found defective, it will be rendered perfect by the utterance of the powerful Mantra "Om Tat Sat" or one of the three designations in the end. With "Om" or "Om Tat Sat" all acts of sacrifice, study of sacred scriptures, spiritual discipline and meditation are commenced. If the doer of sacrifices remembers either of these Mantras all obstacles that stand in the way of success of the sacrifices are removed.

"Om Tat Sat" has been declared to be the triple designation of Brahman in the Vedanta by the knowers of Brahman. The power of creation that lies in the Creator emanates from this Mantra. When He meditated inwardly on the meaning of this Mantra and repeated the threefold word, He acquired the power to create. Then He created the Brahmanas, gave them the Vedas to be their guide and directed them to perform sacrifices and other rites.

Puraa: Of old: At the beginning of creation by the Prajapati.

Brahman here means the Veda.

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ।।२४।।

तस्मात् therefore, ॐ Om, इति thus, उदाहृत्य uttering, यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः the acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, प्रवर्तन्ते begin, विधानोक्ताः as enjoined in the scriptures, सततम् always, ब्रह्मवादिनाम् of the students of Brahman.

24. Therefore, with the utterance of "Om" are the acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity as enjoined in the scriptures, always begun by the students of Brahman.

Commentary: Those who are knowers of the scriptures have a vivid impression of Om in their minds by means of meditation and then they will utter the Pranava with the proper attitude and feeling. Then meditating on Om and uttering it, they perform the sacrifices. Just as a hill-stick is very useful in climbing a hill, just as a boat is very useful in crossing a river, so also Om is very useful and important at the commencement of an action or sacrifice.

It is not desirable to renounce actions or sacrifices to attain union with the Lord. What is wanted is total and perfect surrender of all actions to God. Sacrifice, charity and austerity are not hindrances to the attainment of Self-realisation; on the contrary the attainment of liberation is rendered easy by their performance without any selfish desires or egoism.

तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।
दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥२५॥

तत् That, इति thus, अनभिसन्धाय without aiming at, फलम् fruit, यज्ञतपःक्रियाः acts of sacrifice and austerity, दानक्रियाः acts of gifts, च and, विविधाः various, क्रियन्ते are performed, मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः by the seekers of liberation.

25. Uttering *Tat,* without aiming at the fruits, are the acts of sacrifice and austerity and the various acts of gifts performed by the seekers of liberation.

Commentary: *With Tat:* With the utterance of the word *Tat* (That).

Phalam: Fruit of sacrifice, austerity and charity.

Danakriyah: Acts of charity such as gifts of land, gold, rice, clothes, etc.

The immortal Soul which transcends the whole world, the three Gunas, the three bodies, the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, which illumines everything, which is the basis of all, and the source of everything is connoted by the word Tat. The sages and the aspirants meditate on Tat. They utter the word Tat and say, "May all our actions and the fruits of them be in the name of Tat (That or Brahman)."

Thus they offer all actions and their fruits to Brahman and practise renunciation. They are freed from egoism and the bondage of Karma. They attain Self-realisation through purity of heart caused by selfless, motiveless and desireless actions.

The action that is ennobled and sanctified by uttering Om at the beginning and which is offered to "That" is transformed into the nature of Brahman. "All actions in their entirety, O Arjuna, culminate in wisdom" (IV. 33). He who does the actions with the spirit of sacrifice becomes Brahman eventually.

Tat is symbolic of the presentation of all the fruits of all such activities to Brahman. If you utter Tat, it is tantamount to saying, "They are not mine." What has been begun with Om is given away to Brahman with the utterance of Tat.

The use of *Sat* is described in the following verse.

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥२६॥

सद्भावे in the sense of reality, साधुभावे in the sense of goodness, च and, सत् Sat, इति thus, एतत् this, प्रयुज्यते is used, प्रशस्ते auspicious, कर्मणि (in the sense of) an act, तथा so also, सत् Sat, शब्दः word, पार्थ O Partha, युज्यते is used.

26. The word *Sat* is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and so also, O Arjuna, the word *Sat* is used in the sense of an auspicious act.

Commentary: *Sat-bhava:* That which is unchanging amidst the changing, that which is permanent amidst the impermanent, that which exists in the past, present and future is Sat; the reality behind the ever-changing names and forms is Sat; the substratum in which the ever-changing forms inhere is Sat. Meritorious action is Sat.

Sadhu-bhava: An attribute of harmony with nature, so that the world's cycle moves smoothly.

The word Sat is powerful enough to make a defective action perfect and complete. When a good action is likely to be rendered 'Asat' or bad owing to a single defect, the use of the word 'Sat' makes it free from defects and brings it to a successful termination. The word 'Sat' removes the evil quality of the action as it has the power of purifying and rendering the act perfect.

Sat is Existence Absolute. Sat is Para Brahman. Sat is the inexpressible symbol of that mysterious indescribable, illimitable, indivisible, self-luminous, immortal Brahman.

The word 'Sat' is used when you wish to express the reality of an object which is unreal or which is relatively real, as for instance, the birth of a son who is unreal or relatively real; in telling that a man is one of good conduct when his conduct is not good or is only relatively good, and in expressing that an act is auspicious, when it is not auspicious or only relatively auspicious.

Brahman alone is real. It alone really exists. But we say when a son is born to Mr. Govindan that Mr. Govindan's son has come into existence. From the viewpoint of Brahman or Existence Absolute, Mr. Govindan's son never exists.

The word 'Sat' which is only applied to Brahman is used also for Mr. Govindan's son who is unreal or relatively real. Brahman alone is absolutely good and absolutely auspicious. But the word 'Sat' that can properly be applied to Brahman alone is applied to an act which is not auspicious or which is only relatively auspicious. The use of 'Sat' renders the imperfectly performed actions perfect.

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥२७॥

यज्ञे in sacrifice, तपसि in austerity, दाने in gift, च and, स्थितिः steadiness, सत् Sat, इति thus, च and, उच्यते is called, कर्म action, च and, एव also, तदर्थीयम् in connection with these or for the sake of the Supreme, सत् Sat, इति thus, एव even, अभिधीयते is called.

27. Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and gift, is also called 'Sat' and also action in connection with these (or for the sake of the Supreme) is called 'Sat'.

Commentary: If you perform sacrifice, austerity, gift and all actions in a spirit of total surrender to the Lord or the Eternal Being with purity and sincerity of heart, you will attain the highest goal of life or immortality, freedom and eternal bliss. If you do them in the name and for the sake of Brahman you will attain perfection and supreme peace of the Absolute.

If you pin your faith on the glory and power of this name 'Om' or 'Om Tat Sat', you will be freed from the bondage of birth and death. If you perform any sacrifice, austerity or charity or any action in a selfless and motiveless spirit, surrendering all the actions and their rewards to the Lord and if you utter the word 'Sat' with faith, feeling and devotion, you will attain perfection and success in the action.

Even the imperfect and non-Sattvic acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift will be turned into perfect and Sattvic ones.

These: Sacrifice, austerity and gift.

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥२८॥

अश्रद्धया without faith, हुतम् is sacrificed, दत्तम् given, तपः austerity, तप्तम् is practised, कृतम् performed, च and, यत् whatever, असत् Asat, इति thus, उच्यते is called, पार्थ O Partha, न not, च and, तत् that, प्रेत्य hereafter (after death), न not, इह here.

28. Whatever is sacrificed, given or performed, and whatever austerity is practised without faith, it is called 'Asat', O Arjuna; it is naught here or hereafter (after death).

Commentary: *Asat:* That which changes form and has no permanent existence. It does not mean non-existence as such.

Acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift that are performed without faith, under pressure, or to prevent some sort of trouble or to gratify a craving, are Asat in their nature. They yield no permanent benefit or fruit to anybody.

Any sacrifice, austerity or gift done without dedicating it to the Lord will be of no avail to the doer in this earthly life here or in the life beyond hereafter. It would be as useless as showers of rain falling on rocky ground or pouring oblations of *ghee* (clarified butter) on cold ashes. If you have no faith you will become egoistic and obstinate. Your heart will become hard. If you perform even hundreds of sacrifices without faith, without the spirit of self-surrender to the Lord, even if you distribute the wealth of the whole world in charity without faith in and devotion to the Lord, all these would be worthless and useless. The sages will not appreciate such sacrifices or gifts. Energy, money and time are simply wasted.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम सप्तदशोऽध्यायः।।

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventeenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of the Division of the Threefold Faith.

अथ अष्टादशोऽध्यायः

EIGHTEENTH DISCOURSE

मोक्षसंन्यासयोगः

THE YOGA OF LIBERATION BY RENUNCIATION

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।
त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ।।१।।

संन्यासस्य of renunciation, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, तत्त्वम् the essence or truth, इच्छामि (I) wish, वेदितुम् to know, त्यागस्य of Tyaga or abandonment, च and, हृषीकेश O Krishna, पृथक् severally, केशिनिषूदन slayer of Kesi.

Arjuna said:

1. I desire to know severally, O mighty-armed, the essence or truth of renunciation, O Hrishikesa, as also of abandonment, O slayer of Kesi.

Commentary: The teaching of the whole of the Gita-Sastra is summed up beautifully in this discourse. This last discourse is a brief masterly summary of all that is told in the previous chapters. Arjuna wishes to know the distinction between Sannyasa and Tyaga.

Kesi was an Asura whom Lord Krishna slew. So, Lord Krishna is addressed as *Kesinishudana* by Arjuna.

The words Sannyasa and Tyaga have been used here and there in the preceding discourses, but their connotations are not lucidly distinguished. Therefore Lord Krishna clearly explains to Arjuna the right significance of the two terms in the following verse.

श्री भगवानुवाच

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥२॥

काम्यानाम् (of) desireful, कर्मणाम् of actions, न्यासम् the renunciation, संन्यासम् Sannyasa, कवयः the sages, विदुः understand, सर्वकर्मफलत्यागम् the abandonment of the fruits of all works, प्राहुः declare, त्यागम् abandonment, विचक्षणाः the wise.

The Blessed Lord said:

2. The sages understand Sannyasa to be the renunciation of action with desire; the wise declare the abandonment of the fruits of all actions as Tyaga.

Commentary: *Kamya Karmani:* Activities such as the Asvamedha (a special sacrifice), etc., which are performed for the attainment of specific selfish ends. The wise men declare that *Tyaga* means abandonment of the fruits of all the Nitya and Naimittika works (ordinary and extraordinary or occasional duties).

The root-meaning of the words *Sannyasa* and *Tyaga* is 'to give up'. In popular usage Sannyasa and Tyaga are more or less synonymous. Both mean 'renunciation'. The two words do not mean two altogether distinct ideas as stone and fruit, or pot and cloth. They convey the same general idea with a slight distinction.

An objector asks: "It is said that the Nitya and Naimittika actions cannot produce any fruits. Why then is the relinquishment of their fruits mentioned here? It is like asking for the relinquishment of the barren woman's son!"

We say: "The objection is not correct. In the opinion of the Lord, ordinary and occasional duties cause their own fruits (vide XVIII. 12). Sannyasins alone who have renounced the desire for the fruits of actions will not get the fruits, but other persons will have to reap the fruits of the ordinary and occasional actions."

If one renounces all actions after the attainment of Self-realisation and enters into the fourth order of life (Sannyasa) it is called Vidvat-Sannyasa. If one renounces all actions and enters into the order of Sannyasa for the sake of doing Vedanta-Vichara (or reflection on the truths of the Vedanta-philosophy and on the true significance of the great sentences of the Upanishads which reveal the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Being) and for thus attaining Self-realisation, it is called Vividisha-Sannyasa.

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।
यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥३॥

त्याज्यम् should be abandoned, दोषवत् (full of) as an evil, इति thus, एके some, कर्म action, प्राहुः declare, मनीषिणः philosophers, यज्ञदानतपःकर्म acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, न not, त्याज्यम् should be relinquished, इति thus, च and, अपरे others.

3. Some philosophers declare that actions should be abandoned as an evil; while others (declare) that acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be relinquished.

Commentary: Some philosophers who follow the doctrine of the Sankhyas declare that all actions should be abandoned as evil, even by those who are fit for Karma Yoga.

Doshavat: As an evil: All Karmas should be abandoned as involving evil because they cause bondage or that they should be relinquished like passion and other such evil tendencies.

Others declare that the acts of sacrifice, gifts and austerities should not be given up by those who are fit for Karma Yoga. These are the opinions of some, who are of great understanding.

Now listen to Me. I will settle this matter and will tell thee how renunciation should be practised.

The subject of the discourse here is about the Karma Yogins only and not about those persons who have gone beyond the path of Karma. It is with reference to the Karma Yogins that these conflicting opinions are held and not with reference to the Jnana Yogins or the Sannyasins who have risen above all worldly concerns.

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तितः ॥४॥

निश्चयम् conclusion or the final truth, शृणु hear, मे My, तत्र there, त्यागे about abandonment, भरतसत्तम O best of the Bharatas, त्यागः abandonment, हि verily, पुरुषव्याघ्र O best of men, त्रिविधः of three kinds, संप्रकीर्तितः has been declared (to be).

4. Hear from Me the conclusion or the final truth about this abandonment, O best of the Bharatas; abandonment, verily, O best of men, has been declared to be of three kinds.

Commentary: Now the Lord gives His own decisive opinion. It is declared in the scriptures that renunciation is of three kinds, viz., Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. The Lord alone can teach the truth about the subject. Whoever wants to be liberated from the miseries of this world must understand the real nature of renunciation.

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥५॥

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, न not, त्याज्यम् should be abandoned, कार्यम् should be performed, एव indeed, तत् that, यज्ञः sacrifice, दानम् gift, तपः austerity, च and, एव indeed, पावनानि purifiers, मनीषिणाम् of the wise.

5. Acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be abandoned, but should be performed; sacrifice, gift and also austerity are the purifiers of the wise.

Commentary: Acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity purify the hearts of those who have no desire for rewards. These actions are considered obligatory and ought to be performed. Actions that are skilfully performed lose their power to bind the soul and free it from earthly bondage.

Now, O Arjuna, I will explain to thee that skilful way by which actions can destroy their own effect.

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥६॥

एतानि these, अपि even, तु but, कर्माणि actions, सङ्गम् attachment, त्यक्त्वा leaving, फलानि fruits, च and, कर्तव्यानि should be performed, इति thus, मे My, पार्थ O Arjuna, निश्चितम् certain, मतम् belief, उत्तमम् best.

6. But even these actions should be performed leaving aside attachment and the desire for rewards, O Arjuna; this is My certain and best conviction.

Commentary: This is a summary of the doctrine of Karma Yoga enunciated before on several occasions. The fault or defect of Karma is certainly not in the action itself, but in the expectation of reward and attachment.

Etani api: Even these: Sacrifice, charity and austerity also, in the same way as other unselfish actions. 'Even these' refers to acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity. Actions that are performed in an unselfish spirit without attachment and idea of agency, do not stand in the way of your obtaining emancipation. When actions are done without expectation of rewards, Rajas and Tamas are destroyed and the mind is filled with Sattva or purity. Actions done with the spirit of selflessness and with discrimination are instrumental in destroying the bonds of Karma (the law of cause and effect).

The Lord said: "Hear from Me the conclusion or the final truth about renunciation" (verse 4 above). Then He said with all the force of His authority that acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be given up as they are purifiers of the wise. "Even these actions should be performed, etc.," is only the conclusion of what the Lord has stated in verse 4.

The word *Api* (even) implies that the acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity should be done by an aspirant although they bind one who has attachment to the actions and a desire for their reward.

Just as the seeds of trees can be rendered barren by being scorched, so the aspirant burns the fruit-bearing tendency of Karma through the abandonment of the desire for the reward.

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥७॥

नियतस्य obligatory, तु verily, संन्यासः renunciation, कर्मणः of action, न not, उपपद्यते is proper, मोहात् from delusion, तस्य of the same, परित्यागः abandonment, तामसः Tamasic, परिकीर्तितः is declared.

7. Verily the renunciation of obligatory action is not proper; the abandonment of the same from delusion is declared to be Tamasic.

Commentary: Renunciation of obligatory action is not proper because it is purifying in the case of an ignorant man. Should a man renounce actions that he should perform as a duty, such renunciation can only be of the quality of darkness. Prescribed duties must not be abandoned and if anyone does so, he is certainly deluded by ignorance. Tamas is ignorance.

Niyata: Prescribed according to one's religion. To hold that a duty is obligatory and then to relinquish it is indeed self-contradictory.

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्त्यजेत् ।
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥८॥

दुःखम् (it is) painful, इति thus, एव even, यत् which, कर्म action, कायक्लेशभयात् from fear of bodily trouble, त्यजेत् abandons, सः he, कृत्वा performing, राजसम् Rajasic, त्यागम् abandonment, न not, एव even, त्यागफलम् the fruit of abandonment, लभेत् obtains.

8. He who abandons action on account of the fear of bodily trouble (because it is painful), does not obtain the merit of renunciation by doing such Rajasic renunciation.

Commentary: *Phalam*: Fruit or reward: Moksha or emancipation which is the reward of renunciation of all actions accompanied with wisdom.

Determination and persistence are required for the performance of religious duties and actions. One may begin action but may relinquish it before it is completed on account of some difficulties or physical suffering.

What then is Sattvic renunciation? The Lord says—

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥९॥

कार्यम् ought to be done, इति thus, एव even, यत् which, कर्म action, नियतम् obligatory, क्रियते is performed, अर्जुन O Arjuna, सङ्गम् attachment, त्यक्त्वा abandoning, फलम् fruit, च and, एव even, सः that, त्यागः abandonment, सात्त्विकः Sattvic (pure), मतः is regarded.

9. Whatever obligatory action is done, O Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, abandoning attachment and also the desire for reward, that renunciation is regarded as Sattvic (pure).

Commentary: A man of pure nature performs actions that have fallen to his lot in accordance with his capacity and his inherent nature. He is not filled with the pride that he is the performer of such actions nor does he hope for any gain therefrom.

An ignorant man may think that the obligatory duties may produce their fruits for the performer by causing self-purification and preventing the sin of omission or non-performance. This sort of thinking and expectation of rewards also must be abandoned. Abandonment of the rewards of actions is praised in this verse.

When a man does obligatory duties without agency and with unselfishness and egolessness his mind is purified, his Antahkarana is prepared for the reception of the divine light or the dawn of Self-knowledge. He gradually becomes fit for devotion to knowledge (Jnana-Nishtha).

The aspirant or seeker after liberation should be prepared to undergo physical sufferings. All acts of self-discipline and self-sacrifice entail physical suffering.

This, again, is the central teaching of the Gita—do your duty without attachment and selfish desires.

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ।।१०।।

न not, द्वेष्टि hates, अकुशलम् disagreeable, कर्म action, कुशले to an agreeable one, न not, अनुषज्जते is attached, त्यागी the abandoner, सत्त्वसमाविष्टः pervaded by purity, मेधावी intelligent, छिन्नसंशयः with his doubts cut asunder.

10. The man of renunciation, pervaded by purity, intelligent, and with his doubts cut asunder, does not hate a disagreeable work nor is he attached to an agreeable one.

Commentary: All actions are equally welcome to the man of renunciation. He is not affected by either pleasure or pain. He is not elated at performing pleasant actions nor does he find unpleasantness when he does disagreeable actions. He does not hate the latter, nor is he attached to the former. Neither has he aversion to painful actions nor attraction to pleasant ones. As he has no attachment to any action or its rewards, he will do any action for the welfare of all beings.

Akusalam Karma: Disagreeable work or work done with expectation of reward, which becomes the cause of bondage to Samsara, by producing a body. He does not hate an unpleasant action, thinking, "Of what use is it?"

Kusale: To good ones which include obligatory daily duties. He has no attachment to them even with the notion that they lead to salvation by purifying the heart and consequently giving rise to the dawn of knowledge and devotion to it.

When one abandons attachment to action and desire for its reward and performs actions vigorously, his heart is filled with Sattva or purity which produces discrimination between the Real and the unreal, the Eternal and the transient. Then he attains knowledge of the Self which dispels all the doubts caused by ignorance. He now realises that the only means of attaining the supreme bliss or eternal peace or immortality is knowledge of the Self. This rends asunder all his doubts. What is the nature of doubt? "Does Brahman exist or not? Do the Upanishads deal with Saguna Brahman or Nirguna Brahman? Is the individual soul identical with the Supreme Being or not? Will I be able to realise the Self or not? Will any of the Karmas (Prarabdha, Sanchita and Agami) affect me? Does this Samsara whose nature is the feelings 'I do this' and 'I enjoy this' belong to the Self or to the mind and intellect? What are the means for liberation—Yoga, devotion, Karma or knowledge of the Self? What is Moksha? Is it Self-realisation or the attainment of the Salokya, Samipya, Sarupya and Sayujya states (dwelling in the kingdom of God, proximity to Him, assuming the same form as the Lord and merging in Him)?"

When a man practises Karma Yoga he gets purity of heart and through purity of heart knows himself to be the immutable actionless Self Who is destitute of birth, or remains without acting or causing others to act (*Cf.* V. 13). He attains devotion to the knowledge of the Self and freedom from all actions. The purpose of the Karma Yoga described above has been taught in this verse.

Medhavi: He who is endowed or united with wisdom. He is a Sthitaprajna. What is *Medha*, then? It is the immediate knowledge of the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Being by meditation on the right significance of the great sentence (*I am Brahman* or *That thou art*), which is free from the three kinds of doubts, viz., Samsaya Bhavana (doubt), Asambhavana (improbability) and Viparitabhavana (perversion), and by the practice of the *four means (see page 58)* and service of the Guru (who is versed in the scriptures and established in Brahman) and hearing the truths from him.

Such a Medhavi will not think that prohibited actions which bind an ignorant man will be unfavourable to him. He will never think that they will bind him if he has to perform them, because he is above good and evil, virtue and vice, right and wrong. He has no idea of agency (Kartritva Abhimana); he feels that he is a Kritakritya, one who has accomplished all actions.

This does not mean that he will do wrong actions. As his will is one with the cosmic will, whatever action he performs will be in accordance with the scriptures. He will never deviate even a fraction of an inch from the rules of the scriptures. The Lord alone works through his mind and senses as he has no individual will.

Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes) are the motives that induce a worldly man to actions. As they are absent in a sage or a Medhavi, he can renounce the fruits of all actions and actions as well.

As the ocean remains calm amidst stormy waves, even so a Sattvic man remains calm amidst adverse or stormy conditions of life. He recognises that the happenings of life are inevitable. He acts in a variety of ways but is not disturbed as he has a balanced and disciplined mind.

There must be no hatred for unpleasant or disagreeable action that brings physical suffering, danger or unlucky results or untoward consequences, when it is the work that should be done. You will have to accept such work also with a willing heart and work with heart and soul. You must have a profound and comprehensive understanding of its need and meaning also. Arjuna failed to understand in the beginning the deep significance and need of the work given by the Lord. He brought in his own foolish philosophy. He failed to do his bounden duty because, due to ignorance, he thought it was an unpleasant or disagreeable action to kill people; but in the end when his eyes were opened by the valuable teachings of the Lord, he understood the need and the meaning of the work although it appeared to him as disagreeable and unpleasant in the beginning, and said: "My illusion is destroyed. I have gained knowledge through Thy grace, O Krishna. I am firm, my doubts are gone. I will act according to Thy instructions."

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥११॥

न not, हि verily, देहभृता by an embodied being, शक्यम् possible, त्यक्तुम् to abandon, कर्माणि actions, अशेषतः entirely, यः who, तु but, कर्मफलत्यागी relinquisher of the fruits of actions, सः he, त्यागी relinquisher, इति thus, अभिधीयते is called.

11. Verily, it is not possible for an embodied being to abandon actions entirely; but he who relinquishes the rewards of actions is verily called a man of renunciation.

Commentary: He who has assumed a human body and yet grumbles at having to perform actions is verily a fool. Can fire that is endowed with heat as its natural property ever think of getting rid of it? So long as you are living in this body you cannot entirely relinquish action. Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "Nor can anyone, even for an instant remain actionless; for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities born of

Nature" (*Cf.* III. 5). Nature (and your own nature, too) will urge you to do actions. You will have to abandon the idea of agency and the fruits of actions. Then you are quite safe. No action will bind you.

The ignorant man who identifies himself with the body and who thinks that he is himself the doer of all actions should not abandon actions. It is impossible for him to relinquish actions. He will have to perform all the prescribed duties while relinquishing their fruits.

Dehabhrita: A wearer of the body: An embodied being, i.e., he who identifies himself with the body. A man who has discrimination between the Real and the unreal, the Eternal and the transient, cannot be called a body-wearer, because he does not think that he is the doer of actions—*vide* chapter II. 21 (He who knows Him Who is indestructible, eternal, unborn, undiminishing—how can that man slay, O Arjuna, or cause to be slain?).

When the ignorant man who is qualified for action does the prescribed duties, relinquishing the desire for the fruits of his actions, he is called a Tyagi, although he is active. This title Tyagi is given to him for the sake of courtesy.

The relinquishment of all actions is possible only for him who has attained Self-realisation and who is, therefore, not a *wearer of the body*, i.e., does not think that the body is the Self. (*Cf.* III. 5)

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥१२॥

अनिष्टम् unwished or disagreeable or evil, इष्टम् wished or agreeable or good, मिश्रम् mixed, च and, त्रिविधम् threefold, कर्मणः of action, फलम् fruit, भवति accrues, अत्यागिनाम् to non-renouncers, प्रेत्य after death, न not, तु but, संन्यासिनाम् to renouncers, क्वचित् ever.

12. The threefold fruit of action (evil, good and mixed) accrues after death to the non-abandoners, but never to the abandoners.

Commentary: One fruit (of action) is pleasant, another is unpleasant, while the third is a mixture of both. Those in whom good actions preponderate are reborn as gods. Men of evil lives are reborn into animal or vegetable kingdoms. If their actions are equally good and bad, they are reborn into the human kingdom. These distinctions of good, evil and mixed do not exist for the liberated sage who has gone beyond the bonds of Karma by destroying egoism, by annihilating the idea of agency and by abandoning the hope of rewards of actions.

The action of a renouncer does not generate desire or attachment thereto. Therefore, after death he is not born again. The actions that are performed without any desire for the reward can bring no bondage to the man at any time.

He who has surrendered the fruits of all his works to the Lord is free from the bondage of Karma. Some kind of action is inevitable and natural to all beings, but the man of renunciation abandons the fruits of actions.

Phalam: Fruit: This is caused by the operation of various external factors. This is brought forth by Avidya (ignorance). It is like jugglery and very delusive. The term *Phala* denotes something that quickly passes away, something not real, not solid.

Karma: Action: Virtue and vice.

Anishtam: Disagreeable or evil, such as hell, the animal kingdom, etc.

Ishtam: Wished or agreeable or good.

Misram: Good and evil mixed together; the human birth.

Only the unenlightened who have not renounced the fruits of actions reap these three sorts of fruits. The real Sannyasins who belong to the highest order of Sannyasa (Paramahamsa Parivrajakas) who are ever engaged in meditation on the pure, immortal Self, who are solely devoted to Self-knowledge, and who rest in their own essential nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute do not reap any fruits as the fire of Self-knowledge has burnt ignorance and its effects which are the seeds of Samsara.

Only a liberated sage who has attained knowledge of the Self and who has no identification with the body can totally relinquish all actions. He knows that the Self is beyond all actions and that action is attributed to the Self by ignorance. The ignorant man who identifies himself with the body cannot abandon actions. He thinks that he is the agent or the doer of all actions and expects to attain the fruits of his actions and so he is born again and again in this world to reap the fruits of these actions.

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥१३॥

पञ्च five, एतानि these, महाबाहो O mighty-armed, कारणानि causes, निबोध learn, मे from Me, सांख्ये in the Sankhya, कृतान्ते which is the end of all actions, प्रोक्तानि as declared, सिद्धये for the accomplishment, सर्वकर्मणाम् of all actions.

13. Learn from Me, O mighty-armed Arjuna, these five causes as declared in the Sankhya system for the accomplishment of all actions.

Commentary: The Self has no connection whatever with activity. Nature does everything. The Self is the silent witness. He remains indifferent. The whole superstructure of human activity is the result of the five well-defined causes which are enumerated in the following verse.

Etani: These: Which are going to be mentioned.

Sankhya: Vedanta: Knowledge of the Self as taught in the Vedanta (the Upanishads) puts an end to all actions. This is the reason why the term *Kritante* (the end of actions) is used here. When the knowledge of the Self arises, all actions terminate. This is taught in chapter II, verse 46: "To the Brahmana who has known the Self all the Vedas are of so much use as is a reservoir of water in a place where there is a flood everywhere." Again, in verse 33 of chapter IV, it is said: "All actions in their entirety, O Arjuna, culminate in knowledge." Vedanta, therefore, which imparts knowledge of the Self, is the end of action. A liberated sage who has attained the knowledge of the Self in accordance with the instructions laid down in the Vedanta becomes a Kritakritya (one who has done everything and has nothing more to do).

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥१४॥

अधिष्ठानम् the seat or body, तथा also, कर्ता the doer, करणम् the senses, च and, पृथग्विधम् of different, विविधाः various, च and, पृथक् different, चेष्टाः functions, दैवम् the presiding deity, च and, एव even, अत्र here, पञ्चमम् the fifth.

14. The seat (body), the doer, the various senses, the different functions of various sorts, and the presiding deity, also, the fifth.

Commentary: Now listen to the characteristics of these five, of which the body is the first. It is termed the support or the seat. The body is the seat of desire, hatred, happiness, misery, knowledge and the like. The individual soul experiences through the body the pleasure and pain that arise through contact with matter. Egoism is the agent or the doer or the enjoyer. Nature does actions but through delusion the individual soul takes to himself the credit of their execution and, therefore, he is called the agent.

Karta: The enjoyer putting on the nature or properties of the limiting adjuncts with which he comes into contact.

Karanam prithagvidham: Various organs such as the organ of hearing, by which the individual soul hears the sound, etc.; organs of knowledge and action and the mind.

Daivam: The presiding deity such as the Sun and the other gods by whose help the eye and the other organs perform their respective functions; destiny.

Cheshta: Play of energy in the organs or the senses during the action.

Absence of any of these factors will make action impossible.

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।
न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥१५॥

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिः by (his) body, speech and mind, यत् whatever, कर्म action, प्रारभते performs, नरः man, न्याय्यम् right, वा or, विपरीतम् the reverse, वा or, पञ्च five, एते these, तस्य its, हेतवः causes.

15. Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech and mind—whether right or the reverse—these five are its causes.

Commentary: *Nyayyam:* Right: Not opposed to Dharma; conformable to the scriptures; justifiable.

Viparitam: The opposite: What is opposite to Dharma and opposed to the scriptures; unjustifiable.

Even those actions,—acts like winking and the like which are necessary conditions of life, are indicated by the term *the right and the reverse,* as they are effects of past Dharma and Adharma.

Tasya Hetavah: Its Causes: The causes of every action.

An objector argues: "In the previous verse it is said that the body, actor, various organs, etc., are the necessary factors of every action. Why do you then make a distinction in actions by saying 'whatever action a man does by the body, speech and mind'?"

Our answer is: "In the performance of every action, one of the three—body, speech or mind—has a more prominent share than the others; while seeing, hearing and other activities which accompany or go along with life are subordinate to that one."

Therefore all actions are classified under three groups and are spoken of as done by the body or speech or mind. The fruit of an action also is enjoyed through the body, speech and mind and one of the three takes a more prominent share than the rest. Therefore, it is proper to say: "Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech and mind...."

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥१६॥

तत्र there (the case), एवम् thus, सति being, कर्तारम् as the agent, आत्मानम् the Self, केवलम् alone, तु verily, यः who, पश्यति sees,

अकृतबुद्धित्वात् owing to untrained understanding, न not, सः he, पश्यति sees, दुर्मतिः of perverted intelligence.

16. Now, such being the case, verily he who—owing to untrained understanding—looks upon his Self, which is isolated, as the agent, he of perverted intelligence, sees not.

Commentary: The Self is always actionless. He is unattached like ether. He is always the silent witness. He is the spectator of activity. The egoistic man of little understanding only thinks that he is the real agent, and so he is bound by actions. He takes birth again and again to reap the fruits of his actions. For him who considers the body as consciousness, God or the Self, it naturally follows that the Self is the agent or the doer. He who identifies himself with the body, who has taken the body as the pure Self, has cast a net over himself, and he leads a deluded life of utter ignorance. He is bound by the fetters or bonds of Karma. He is ever shut up in the prison-house of this body.

He who has not united himself with the Buddhi, who has got an impure or untrained understanding, who regards the Self as the actor or the agent is certainly a man of perverted intelligence. He is deluded. He is really a blind man. He sees not though he has eyes. He does not behold the essence of things. He has no idea of the supreme Principle (the Self) Which is Itself actionless, Which ever stands as a silent witness of the activities of all minds and all organs of all beings, Which moves the minds, organs and the life-force and the bodies to action, just as the magnet makes the iron pieces move. He does not behold the truth about the Self and action.

Durmati: Evil-minded person: A man of perverted intellect or undeveloped reason. He thinks that he alone is the doer or agent. He does not understand anything. He has no knowledge of the actionless, pure, self-luminous Self.

The ignorant man of untrained understanding identifies himself with the five causes and regards the pure actionless Self as the agent or doer of the actions which are really done by these five causes. What is the reason for this? Why does he regard them so? Because he is not endowed with a pure and subtle intellect; his understanding (Buddhi) has not been trained in the practice of Vedanta; he is not equipped with the *four means* of salvation *(see page 58);* his intellect has not been trained by the teachings of the preceptor or the spiritual teacher in the methods of logical reasoning.

He who considers that the pure actionless Self is the agent or the doer is certainly a man of untrained understanding. He has no knowledge of the actionless Self and action. Therefore, he is a man of perverted intelligence. His intellect works or moves in the wrong direction. His intellect moves in the sensual grooves or avenues. It runs like the vicious horse and leads to birth and death. The technique of Buddhi Yoga taught in the Gita enables one effectively to prevent this.

He does not perceive or cognise the Truth though he has eyes. Though he sees, he sees the external, gross, illusory, ever-changing, perishable objects only. He does not behold the one immortal, unchanging, all-blissful essence, which is the basis or substratum of everything. He is like the man with jaundiced eyes, who sees all objects tinged with yellow colour, or like the man suffering from diplopia who beholds many moons, or like the man who thinks that the moon moves when the clouds move, or like the man who, seated in a train, imagines that the trees are moving when it is the train that is really moving. (*Cf.* V. 15; XIII. 30)

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥१७॥

यस्य whose, न not, अहंकृतः egoistic, भावः the notion, बुद्धिः intelligence, यस्य of whom, न not, लिप्यते is tainted, हत्वा having slain, अपि even, सः he, इमान् these, लोकान् people, न not, हन्ति slays, न not, निबध्यते is bound.

17. He who is free from the egoistic notion, whose intelligence is not tainted (by good or evil), though he slays these people, he slayeth not, nor is he bound (by the action).

Commentary: I will explain to thee, O Arjuna, the characteristics of the man who has transcended activity, and who has gone beyond the bonds of Karma.

When selfishness and egoism are destroyed, when desire and personal gain are renounced, actions cannot bind a man. He knows that the Self is not destroyed when the body perishes. He has no idea of agency. The act of killing itself, in his case, becomes one necessary for the peace and harmony of the world. His killing without desire is like the killing of a murderer by the executioner and the judge on behalf of the community for the preservation of peace and harmony in the world.

He who has a trained intellect, pure understanding and developed reason, who has a knowledge of the scriptures, who has devoted himself to the study of the scriptures, who is equipped with the knowledge of logic, who is well trained by the instructions of his preceptor, is absolutely free from the egoistic notion that "I am the agent or the doer." He knows perfectly well that Nature or Guna or one's own nature does everything. He thus thinks: "I am the silent witness of all activities. I am not the doer. These five (the body, the actor, etc.) which are superimposed on the pure, actionless Self through ignorance are the causes of all actions. I do not do anything. The senses move amongst the sense-objects. The qualities (Gunas) move in their counterparts in the senses which are also the products of the Gunas. I know the essence of the divisions of the qualities and their functions. I am in essence without limbs. How can action or work be ascribed to me? I am without hands, without legs, without feet, without breath and without mind. I am ever pure, spotless and immovable and immutable." He will never repent thus: "I have done a wrong action. I ought to have done like this. I have done an evil action. I will go to hell." He is always wise. He can never do a wrong action. His will has become one with the cosmic will. His will has become blended with the will of the Lord. Whatever he does is done by the Lord only. He has no will of his own. He sees rightly. Though he kills, he does not commit the act of killing. He is not bound by the fruit of a vicious action as an effect of that act. He is beyond good and evil, beyond the pairs of opposites, as he has knowledge of the Self.

An objector says: "The statement that *though he kills these people he does not kill,* is self-contradictory."

We say: "This objection is really not tenable. From the worldly point of view the Lord says *though he kills,* because man identifies the Self with the body, etc., and thinks *I am the killer.* From the transcendental point of view explained above, the Lord says, *He kills not, he is not bound.*"

Another objector says: "The Self acts in conjunction with the body, etc.,—'He who looks upon his Self Which is isolated, as the agent....' " (XVIII. 16)

We say: "This objection also cannot stand. As the omnipresent ether is not affected by reason of its subtlety, even so the Self, seated everywhere in the body, is not affected. This immortal, immutable, changeless, formless, attributeless Self, though seated in the body, does not act and is not affected, just as the crystal is not affected by the red colour of the flower that comes into contact with it, just as the sun is not affected by the diseases of the eye. A thing that changes only can join with others and become the agent. The Self is always isolated, independent and free. This Self is immutable (II. 25). The qualities move amidst the qualities (III. 28). Though seated in the body, He does not act (XIII. 31). Actions are wrought by the qualities (III. 27)." You will find in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (4, 3, 7): "It meditates as it were: It moves as it were." By reasoning also we may establish the same conclusion thus:

"The Self is indivisible, all-pervading, infinite, limbless, without parts, independent, ever free and immutable. Therefore the actions of the body can never be ascribed to the agency of the Self.

"Verily the actions of one cannot go to another who has not done them. Just as blue colour cannot belong to the sky, silver to the mother-of-pearl, water to mirage, so also what is ascribed to the Self by ignorance cannot really belong to It. The changes that occur in the body pertain to the body but not to the pure actionless Self which is always the spectator or the silent witness. Therefore, it is right to say that the wise man who is free from egoism and all impurities of the mind, neither kills nor is he bound though he kills."

In chapter II. 19, the Lord stated the proposition—"He slayeth not, nor is he slain." In chapter II. 20, He said: "The Self is unborn, eternal, ancient; the Self is not slain when the body is killed." The Lord has touched here and there that the Self is not affected by works, that there is no necessity for the wise man of doing actions. He concludes that the sage "kills not, nor is he bound", and sums up the teaching of the Gita. The teaching of the Gita has been concluded in this verse. The Sannyasins who are free from egoism are not affected by Karma. The threefold fruits of action, viz., evil, good and mixed (see verse 12 above) do not accrue to them. Those worldly-minded persons who work with egoism and expectation of fruits are tainted by the works. They are forced to experience the fruits of their actions and to take birth again and again. *(Cf.* II. 19; V. 7)

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥१८॥

ज्ञानम् knowledge, ज्ञेयम् the knowable, परिज्ञाता the knower, त्रिविधा threefold, कर्मचोदना impulse to action, करणम् the organ, कर्म the action, कर्ता the agent, इति thus, त्रिविधः threefold, कर्मसंग्रहः the basis of action.

18. Knowledge, the knowable and the knower form the threefold impulse to action; the organ, the action and the agent form the threefold basis of action.

Commentary: Knowledge, the knower and the thing to be known, are together the seed of this world. This is known as the Triputi or the triad. It is the conjunction of these three that impels a man to threefold action, viz., mental, verbal and physical. This triad is the driving force of all the activities of man. He rejoices at the sight of palatable sweetmeats and delicious fruits but is terrified at the sight of a cobra or tiger. The sight of pleasant or unpleasant objects affects him and he attempts either to possess the agreeable objects or to avoid the disagreeable ones.

The Antahkarana (the inner instrument) consists of the mind, intellect, subconscious mind and egoism. The ear, the skin, the tongue, the nose and the eye are the five organs of knowledge. The individual soul, propelled by these five senses, is led into activity. He does actions with the help of the five organs of action, viz., speech, hands, feet, genitals and anus.

Jnanam: Any knowledge; knowledge in general; knowledge of worldly objects, etc.

Jneyam: The object to be known; objects in general.

Parijnata: The knower, the experiencer or the enjoyer, putting on the nature of the limiting adjuncts, a creature of ignorance.

This triad forms the threefold impulse to all action, to action in general. The performance of an action in order to get a thing or to avoid an object is possible only when there is the conjunction of the three, viz., knowledge, knowable and knower.

Karanam: The organ: That by which something is done. The actions done by the five causes of action, viz., the body, etc., which are grouped under the three classes according to their respective seats, viz., mind, speech and body, are all due to the interplay of the organ, etc.

Karta: The agent or the doer; he who sets the organs in motion or action and puts on the nature of the limiting adjunct or vehicle in which he acts. All actions inhere in these three (the organ, the doer and the action itself) and they are, therefore, said to form the basis or the threefold constituents of action.

As action, the various factors of action and the fruits are all made up of the Gunas, the Lord describes them in the following verses.

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ।।१९।।

ज्ञानम् knowledge, कर्म action, च and, कर्ता actor, च and, त्रिधा of three kinds, एव only, गुणभेदतः according to the distinction of Gunas, प्रोच्यते are declared, गुणसंख्याने in the science of Gunas (Sankhya philosophy), यथावत् duly, शृणु hear, तानि them, अपि also.

19. Knowledge, action and actor are declared in the science of the Gunas (Sankhya philosophy) to be of three kinds

only, according to the distinction of the Gunas. Of these also, hear duly.

Commentary: The three qualities overpower the whole of creation with their special nature and bring it entirely under their control. The nature of action, the actor and his knowledge are threefold according to the Guna that is predominant. If all the three are Sattvic, then the action will not bind the man.

Karta: The doer of the actions.

The science of the Gunas here referred to is Kapila's system of philosophy. Though the Sankhya system is opposed to Vedanta with reference to the Supreme Truth, viz., the oneness or non-duality of Brahman, yet it is an authority on the science of the Gunas.

I shall describe knowledge, action and actor, as also their various distinctions caused by different Gunas, scientifically and rationally. Hear My teachings, O Arjuna, with rapt attention. You will be immensely benefited.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ।।२०।।

सर्वभूतेषु in all beings, येन by which, एकम् one, भावम् reality, अव्ययम् indestructible, ईक्षते (one) sees, अविभक्तम् inseparable, विभक्तेषु in the separated, तत् that, ज्ञानम् knowledge, विद्धि know, सात्त्विकम् Sattvic (pure).

20. That by which one sees the one indestructible Reality in all beings, not separate in all the separate beings—know thou that knowledge to be Sattvic.

Commentary: That knowledge that sees no difference in all objects that are perceived, is pure. The seer beholds the one all-pervading imperishable substance or essence behind the seeming diversity of the objects. He beholds unity in diversity, one in many, all in one. He sees that all the diverse objects are rooted in the One.

Bhavam: Reality: The One Self.

Sarvabhuteshu: In all beings: From the Unmanifested down to the insentient and unmoving objects

Avyayam: Indestructible; inexhaustible; unchangeable; that which cannot be exhausted either in itself or in its properties; immutable.

Just as the ether is indivisible, so also the Self is indivisible. The Self is the same in all bodies. It is the common consciousness in all bodies. It is not different in different bodies. It is one homogeneous indivisible essence or substance in all bodies, in all beings. Know thou, O Arjuna, this direct and right perception of the non-dual Self as Sattvic (pure). (*Cf.* IV. 35; VI. 29; XIII. 16, 28; XVIII. 30)

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥२१॥

पृथक्त्वेन as different from one another, तु but, यत् which, ज्ञानम् knowledge, नानाभावान् various entities, पृथग्विधान् of distinct kinds, वेत्ति knows, सर्वेषु (in) all, भूतेषु in beings, तत् that, ज्ञानम् knowledge, विद्धि know, राजसम् Rajasic.

21. But that knowledge which sees in all beings various entities of distinct kinds as different from one another—know thou that knowledge to be Rajasic.

Commentary: *Knowledge which sees:* As knowledge cannot be an agent, this should be interpreted to mean "knowledge by which one sees."

Entities: Selves or souls.

Different from one another: Regarding them as different in different bodies.

The knowledge that is led by the idea of separateness is passionate. Enveloping as it does the manifold creation with the veil of separateness, it deludes even the wise man. Owing to passionate knowledge, beings appear to be separate and the perception of unity is also lost sight of. That knowledge which beholds multiplicity in created objects and differentiates them as being small or great, according to their form and size, is of passionate nature and tainted. A man with passionate knowledge sees diversity everywhere. He beholds the many only.

Now I will explain to thee, O Arjuna, knowledge that is of the quality of darkness, in order that thou mayest avoid it.

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

यत् which, तु but, कृत्स्नवत् as if it were the whole, एकस्मिन् one single, कार्ये to effect, सक्तम् attached, अहैतुकम् without reason, अतत्त्वार्थवत् without foundation in Truth, अल्पम् trivial, च and, तत् that, तामसम् Tamasic (dark), उदाहृतम् is declared.

22. But that which clings to one single effect as if it were the whole, without reason, without foundation in Truth, and trivial—that is declared to be Tamasic.

Commentary: The knowledge which regards that each and every object or being exists by itself and is perfect by itself, is Tamasic.

One single effect: Such as the body, thinking it to be the Self, or an idol, taking it for God, and thinking that there is nothing higher than that.

The naked Jains consider that the soul which dwells in the body is of the same size as that of the body. Some regard that Isvara is a mere piece of stone or wood. Such knowledge is really not based on reason. It does not see things in their true light. It is narrow (Alpam) as it is not founded on reason. It produces very small results too. It extends over a limited area and is not all-comprehensive. This knowledge is said to be Tamasic, as it is found in Tamasic persons who are devoid of the power of discrimination.

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥२३॥

नियतम् ordained, सङ्गरहितम् free from attachment, अरागद्वेषतः without love or hatred, कृतम् done, अफलप्रेप्सुना by one not desirous of the fruit, कर्म action, यत् which, तत् that, सात्त्विकम् Sattvic (pure), उच्यते is declared.

23. An action which is ordained, which is free from attachment, and which is done without love or hatred by one

who is not desirous of any reward—that action is declared to be Sattvic.

Commentary: *Niyatam:* Ordained: Obligatory. One is not excited to perform an obligatory action through love or hatred.

This is a pure act. The performer of such pure action experiences great joy. He does his duty or any other work whole-heartedly not caring for the reward but offering it willingly at the feet of the Lord. He works in accordance with the dictates of the scriptures. Now I will explain to thee, O Arjuna, the nature of action which is Rajasic or passionate. Do thou listen to Me with rapt attention.

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ।।२४।।

यत् which, तु but, कामेप्सुना by one longing for desires, कर्म action, साहङ्कारेण with egoism, वा or, पुनः again, क्रियते is performed, बहुलायासम् with much effort, तत् that, राजसम् Rajasic (passionate), उदाहृतम् is declared.

24. But that action which is done by one longing for the fulfilment of desires or gain with egoism or with much effort—that is declared to be Rajasic (passionate).

Commentary: A passionate man performs various selfish actions. He boasts of his actions in public. Passion prompts him to do them. He can never work without expectation of a reward.

Kamepsuna, phalepsuna: The Rajasic or passionate man expects pleasures as fruits of action. A liberated sage alone is absolutely free from egoism. He will not dream even of a reward for the action, because all his desires are gratified when he realises Brahman. He is an Aptakama. *(Aptakamasya ka spriha?)* How can there be longing or craving in a sage in whom all desires are gratified or burnt by the fire of Self-knowledge?

Even the performer of a pure act, who has no knowledge of the Self is egoistic. If such be the case, the Rajasic and Tamasic workers are much more egoistic. In worldly parlance we speak of a learned Pundit: "This Pundit is a very modest, unassuming, and egoless Brahmana."

Now listen, O Arjuna, to the characteristics of action that is of darkness.

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥२५॥

अनुबन्धम् consequence, क्षयम् loss, हिंसाम् injury, अनपेक्ष्य without regard, च and, पौरुषम् (one's own) ability, मोहात् from delusion, आरभ्यते is undertaken, कर्म action, यत् which, तत् that, तामसम् Tamasic (dark), उच्यते is said.

25. That action which is undertaken from delusion, without a regard for the consequences, loss, injury and (one's own) ability—that is declared to be Tamasic (dark).

Commentary: Tamasic acts cause harm to others. A Tamasic man reflects not at all whether he has the capacity to perform these useless actions, but continues to act blindly. With utter thoughtlessness he sets aside any reflection as to the difficulty of performing the action and what the result of it would be. He carries it on in his own egoistical manner. He does not discriminate between the good and the bad, or what is one's own and what belongs to another.

Kshayam: Loss of power and of wealth, resulting from the performance of an action.

Himsa: Injury to living beings.

Paurusham: One's own ability or capacity to complete the work.

Now listen to the characteristics that pertain to the pure agent. The Lord proceeds to deal with the distinction among the agents.

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥२६॥

मुक्तसङ्गः who is free from attachment, अनहंवादी non-egoistic, धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः endowed with firmness and enthusiasm, सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः in success or failure, निर्विकारः unaffected, कर्ता an agent, सात्त्विकः Sattvic (pure), उच्यते is called.

26. An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with firmness and enthusiasm, and unaffected by success or failure, is called Sattvic (pure).

Commentary: A pure agent does his actions with his whole heart without feeling proud at the performance. He looks for the proper time and place and in accordance with the behests of the scriptures determines whether such actions are worth doing or not. He develops courage and a powerful will. He never seeks physical comforts. He is quite prepared to sacrifice his life for a noble cause. He is neither elated by success nor grieved by failure. He always keeps a balanced mind when he does any action. O Arjuna, that man is a pure agent who, while working, exhibits such qualities.

Siddhi: Success; attainment of the fruit of action performed.

Nirvikarah: Unaffected as having been urged to act merely by the authority of the scriptures, not by a desire for the sake of the reward.

Now I will tell thee, O Arjuna, of the characteristics of a passionate agent.

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥२७॥

रागी passionate, कर्मफलप्रेप्सुः desirous of the fruit of action, लुब्धः greedy, हिंसात्मकः cruel, अशुचिः impure, हर्षशोकान्वितः moved by joy and sorrow, कर्ता agent, राजसः Rajasic (passionate), परिकीर्तितः is called.

27. Passionate, desiring to obtain the reward of actions, greedy, cruel, impure, moved by joy and sorrow, such an agent is said to be Rajasic (passionate).

Commentary: A passionate agent is the abode of sins and of greed of the whole world. Wherever he imagines that he may gain worldly fruit he will strive whole-heartedly to obtain it. Whatsoever he gains he keeps strictly to himself and his family. If he attains the fruits of his actions he rejoices. If he fails in his attempt he is overcome by grief.

Lubdhah: Greedy: Thirsting for others' property; not sharing one's own wealth with deserving persons.

Himsatmakah: Doing injury to others.

Asuchih: Impure: Having no external and internal purity. (Internal purity is freedom from lust, anger, greed and pride; the heart is filled with compassion, complacency, forgiveness, dispassion, love, etc.)

Harshasokanvitah. Joy on the attainment of what is desirable, pleasant or agreeable: sorrow on the attainment of what is not desirable, pleasant or agreeable, and on having to part with what is desirable. He will be elated with joy when he attains success; he will be overcome by grief when he fails in his undertaking.

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥२८॥

अयुक्तः unsteady, प्राकृतः vulgar, स्तब्धः unbending, शठः cheating, नैष्कृतिकः malicious, अलसः lazy, विषादी desponding, दीर्घसूत्री procrastinating, च and, कर्ता agent, तामसः Tamasic (dark), उच्यते is said.

28. Unsteady, vulgar, unbending, cheating, malicious, lazy, desponding and procrastinating—such an agent is called Tamasic.

Commentary: Owing to his vulgar nature he is not able to discriminate between proper and improper actions. His heart is filled with vanity. He will never prostrate himself before the deity or a sage. He is very stiff and unbending in his demeanour. He is the very embodiment of deceit, the abode of the passion for gambling and all such vices. He is ever ready to do evil actions. When an opportunity for his doing good occurs, he is utterly slothful and inactive but he is very alert in doing evil.

Prakritah: Vulgar: Quite uncultured in intellect; one who is childish.

Stabdhah: Unbending (like a stick), not bowing down to anybody.

Shathah: Cheating; concealing his real nature.

Naishkritikah: Creating quarrels and disputes among the people.

Alasah: Lazy: Not doing even that which ought to be done.

Dirghasutri: Postponing duties too long; always slothful; not performing even in a month what ought to be done today or tomorrow.

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥२९॥

बुद्धेः of intellect, भेदम् division, धृतेः of firmness, च and, एव even, गुणतः according to qualities, त्रिविधम् threefold, शृणु hear, प्रोच्यमानम् as I declare, अशेषेण fully, पृथक्त्वेन distinctly, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya.

29. Hear thou the threefold division of intellect and firmness according to the Gunas, as I declare them fully and distinctly, O Arjuna.

Commentary: *Dhananjaya:* The conqueror of wealth: Arjuna is so called because he acquired much material and spiritual wealth during his tours of conquest (Digvijaya) to the four quarters of the earth.

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥३०॥

प्रवृत्तिम् action, the path of work, च and, निवृत्तिम् the path of renunciation, च and, कार्याकार्ये what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, भयाभये fear and fearlessness, बन्धम् bondage, मोक्षम् liberation, च and, या which, वेत्ति knows, बुद्धिः intellect, सा that, पार्थ O Arjuna, सात्त्विकी Sattvic.

30. The intellect which knows the path of work and renunciation, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation—that intellect is Sattvic (pure), O Arjuna.

Commentary: The threefold nature of knowledge has been described already (verse 22 above). Now the threefold nature of the intellect is described. Knowledge is different from the intellect.

Pravritti: Action: The cause of bondage; the path of action.

Nivritti: Inaction: The cause of liberation; the path of renunciation; the path of Sannyasa.

Karyakarye: The pure intellect knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done at particular places and times; it knows the actions that produce visible or invisible results, that are enjoined or prohibited by the scriptures. It guides a man who relies on the scriptural ordinances for his daily conduct of life.

Bhayabhaye: Fear and fearlessness: The cause of fear and fearlessness either visible or invisible.

Bandham moksham: Bondage and liberation together with their causes.

Knowledge is a Vritti (function or state) of the intellect whereas intellect is what functions or undergoes the change of state. Even firmness is only a particular Vritti (modification or state) of the intellect. (*Cf.* XVIII. 20)

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥३१॥

यया by which, धर्मम् Dharma, अधर्मम् Adharma, च and, कार्यम् what ought to be done, च and, अकार्यम् what ought not to be done, एव even, च and, अयथावत् wrongly, प्रजानाति understands, बुद्धिः intellect, सा that, पार्थ O Partha, राजसी Rajasic (passionate).

31. That, by which one wrongly understands Dharma and Adharma and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done—that intellect, O Arjuna, is Rajasic (passionate).

Commentary: There is no proper equivalent in the English language for the word *Dharma.* Duty, righteousness, virtue, law are very poor translations of the word. That which elevates you and takes you to the goal, i.e., Brahman or the Self, is Dharma. That which hurls you down into the dark abyss of ignorance is Adharma. What is ordained in the scriptures is Dharma; what is prohibited by them is Adharma. A Rajasic intellect is not able to distinguish between right and wrong or to understand the difference between righteous and unrighteous actions.

Ayathavat: Wrongly: Contrary to what is determined by all authorities or men of wisdom or to the highest knowledge.

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसाऽऽवृता ।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥३२॥

अधर्मम् Adharma, धर्मम् Dharma, इति thus, या which, मन्यते thinks, तमसा by darkness, आवृता enveloped, सर्वार्थान् all things, विपरीतान् perverted, च and, बुद्धिः intellect, सा that, पार्थ O Partha, तामसी Tamasic (dark).

32. That, which, enveloped in darkness, sees Adharma as Dharma and all things perverted—that intellect, O Arjuna, is Tamasic (dark).

Commentary: That intellect which regards righteous acts as evil, and considers right things to be false, which treats everything in a contrary sense and looks upon virtues as if they were vices and takes everything that the scriptures declare to be good as being entirely wrong, is Tamasic. It views all things in a perverted light.

Thus, O Arjuna, I have explained to thee the three aspects of the intellect. Now listen to the explanation of the characteristics of the three aspects of firmness.

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः ।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥३३॥

धृत्या by firmness, यया (by) which, धारयते holds, मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः the functions of the mind, the Prana and the senses, योगेन by Yoga, अव्यभिचारिण्या unswerving, धृतिः firmness, सा that, पार्थ O Arjuna, सात्त्विकी Sattvic (pure).

33. The unwavering firmness by which, through Yoga, the functions of the mind, the life-force and the senses are restrained—that firmness, O Arjuna, is Sattvic (pure).

Commentary: When firmness is awakened in the mind, the activities of the mind, the life-force and the senses are brought under control. The senses are withdrawn into the mind. The Prana and the Apana pass into the Sushumna Nadi.

Yoga: Samadhi or concentration of the mind. You cannot restrain the mind, the life-force and the senses by mere firmness. You can control them only by firmness which is ever accompanied by concentration of the mind.

When the mind, the life-force and the senses are curbed by unwavering firmness, they cannot run towards external sensual objects, they cannot do any mischief, they cannot move in ways which are opposed to the scriptures, they will be absorbed into their respective causes and their outgoing tendencies will be totally checked.

This firmness is not repression or suppression, but an intelligent sublimation and inner transformation.

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥३४॥

यया (by) which, तु but, धर्मकामार्थान् Dharma (duty), desire and wealth, धृत्या by firmness, धारयते holds, अर्जुन O Arjuna, प्रसङ्गेन on account of attachment, फलाकाङ्क्षी desirous of the fruit of action, धृतिः firmness, सा that, पार्थ O Arjuna, राजसी Rajasic (passionate).

34. But that, O Arjuna, by which, on account of attachment and desire for reward, one holds fast to Dharma (duty), enjoyment of pleasures and earning of wealth—that firmness, O Arjuna, is Rajasic (passionate).

Commentary: The man of Rajasic firmness imagines that he will achieve the threefold aim of life and clings to it passionately. He is desirous of getting the rewards of his actions. He endeavours to attain Dharma, wealth and pleasure. The firmness of such a person is Rajasic or passionate.

Now listen, O Arjuna, to the third kind of firmness—the Tamasic type.

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥३५॥

यया by which, स्वप्नम् sleep, भयम् fear, शोकम् grief, विषादम् despair, मदम् conceit, एव indeed, च and, न not, विमुञ्चति abandons,

दुर्मेधाः a stupid man, धृतिः firmness, सा that, पार्थ O Arjuna, तामसी Tamasic (dark).

35. That, by which a stupid man does not abandon sleep, fear, grief, despair and also conceit—that firmness, O Arjuna, is Tamasic.

Commentary: The man who is an embodiment of darkness is made up of every possible kind of evil. He is very indolent and sinful. He is inordinately addicted to sleep. He considers these to be only proper. He experiences sorrow on account of his evil actions. As he is very much attached to the body he entertains great fear. He is ever discontented at heart. He is lustful and self-conceited. He does not know how to behave. He is rude and insolent. He indulges much in sensual pleasures.

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ।।३६।।

सुखम् pleasure, तु indeed, इदानीम् now, त्रिविधम् threefold, शृणु hear, मे of Me, भरतर्षभ O lord of the Bharatas, अभ्यासात् from practice, रमते rejoices, यत्र in which, दुःखान्तम् the end of pain, च and, निगच्छति (he) attains to.

36. And now hear from Me, O Arjuna, of the threefold pleasure, in which one rejoices by practice and surely comes to the end of pain.

Commentary: A little of this pleasure experienced by the Self must result in the cessation of pain. This pleasure is threefold in its nature and I will describe its aspects in turn, O Arjuna. (*Cf.* VI. 20, 30).

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ।।३७।।

यत् which, तत् that, अग्रे at first, विषम् poison, इव like, परिणामे in the end, अमृतोपमम् like nectar, तत् that, सुखम् pleasure, सात्त्विकम् Sattvic, प्रोक्तम् is declared (to be), आत्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् born of the purity of one's own mind due to Self-realisation.

37. That which is like poison at first but in the end like nectar—that happiness is declared to be Sattvic, born of the purity of one's own mind due to Self-realisation.

Commentary: *Agre visham iva:* In the beginning it is attended with much pain as one has to abandon the sensual objects and comforts and practise severe austerities and rigorous Sadhana. He has to undergo a severe ordeal when he practises Yama, Niyama, Tapas and various other vows. He has to cultivate dispassion or indifference to sensual pleasures. This gives him much pain at first. The practice of concentration and meditation also gives pain in the beginning. Subjugation of the senses is also very troublesome. *Nux vomica* is very bitter. One feels much discomfort when he takes a mixture that contains *nux vomica.* But he derives much pleasure in the end when he gets vigour and good appetite and when his dyspepsia is cured. Even so the aspirant drinks the nectar of immortality in the end, attains the highest knowledge, rejoices in the Self to his heart's content and enjoys supreme peace and eternal bliss.

Proktam: It is declared by the wise.

Atmabuddhiprasadajam: Born as purity of one's own intellect; or born of the direct, perfect and clear knowledge of Brahman or the immortal, self-luminous, eternal and supreme Self or the Absolute. The individual self experiences Sattvic happiness when it realises union with the highest Self.

The pleasure so born is Sattvic. (*Cf.* VI. 1, 2)

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ।।३८।।

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगात् from the contact of the sense-organs with the objects, यत् which, तत् that, अग्रे at first, अमृतोपमम् like nectar, परिणामे in the end, विषम् poison, इव like, तत् that, सुखम् pleasure, राजसम् Rajasic, स्मृतम् is declared.

38. That happiness which arises from the contact of the sense-organs with the objects, which is at first like nectar, and in the end like poison—that is declared to be Rajasic.

Commentary: Sensual pleasure is mixed with pain, fear and sin. A small grain of sensual pleasure is mixed with a mountain of pain. He who indulges in sensual pleasures will have to experience pain also, side by side. He is afraid of losing the objects that give him pleasure. He is attached to them. Attachment is death. It brings him again and again to this world of death. Fear and attachment co-exist with sensual pleasure. He has to exert a lot to get money. He can obtain the objects through money. During exertion he commits many sinful acts and he will have to suffer in hell. The next birth will be of a very low nature. He tells lies and cheats people to obtain money. The senses also lose their vigour through indulgence in sensual pleasure. He loses his strength, vigour, wealth and energy. His intellect becomes dull, weak, impure, turbid and perverted. He loses his money and proper understanding. (*Cf.* V. 22)

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥३९॥

यत् which, अग्रे at first, च and, अनुबन्धे in the sequel, च and, सुखम् pleasure, मोहनम् delusive, आत्मनः of the self, निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थम् arising from sleep, indolence and heedlessness, तत् that, तामसम् Tamasic, उदाहृतम् is declared.

39. That happiness which at first as well as in the sequel deludes the self, and which arises from sleep, indolence and heedlessness—that is declared to be Tamasic.

Commentary: *Anubandhe:* In the consequence; after the termination. The pleasure that is begotten by evil habits like drinking liquors and eating worthless things is delusive of the self. The man becomes oblivious of the path he ought to tread. Such pleasure is verily of the nature of darkness.

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥४०॥

न not, तत् that, अस्ति is, पृथिव्याम् on the earth, वा or, दिवि in heaven, देवेषु among the gods, वा or, पुनः again, सत्त्वम् being, प्रकृतिजैः

born of Prakriti (matter), मुक्तम् freed, यत् which, एभिः from these, स्यात् may be, त्रिभिः from three, गुणैः by qualities.

40. There is no being on earth or again in heaven among the gods, that is liberated from the three qualities born of Nature.

Commentary: The Gunas form the warp and woof of everything as threads do in the case of cloth.

Here in the world of mortals or there in the heaven-world, there is no creature that is not bound by the three qualities of Nature. Can there be a cloth without threads? Can there be a man without blood and bones? Can there be a mountain without stones? Even so there is not a single creature in the whole universe into whose composition the three qualities of matter do not enter. The whole of creation is wrought of these three qualities. They have given rise to the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva). In the world of mortals the triplicity of agent, action and fruit owe their origin to them. They are the cause of the different functions of the four castes. This Samsara has been compared to the peepul tree in chapter XV. 1. This Samsara is made up of the three qualities and is kept up by the force of ignorance.

Action, instruments of action and fruits have set the wheel of Samsara in motion and this wheel is revolving from beginningless time. It is only a liberated sage who has attained knowledge of the Self who puts a check to this wheel, goes beyond the cause and the effect, and breaks the bonds of Karma.

Cut this mysterious tree of Samsara with the strong sword of non-attachment, transcend the three Gunas and rest in your own essential divine nature as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥४१॥

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशाम् of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, शूद्राणाम् of Sudras, च as also, परंतप O Parantapa, कर्माणि duties, प्रविभक्तानि are distributed, स्वभावप्रभवैः born of their own nature, गुणैः by qualities.

41. Of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, as also of Sudras, O Arjuna, the duties are distributed according to the qualities born of their own nature.

Commentary: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas are qualified to practise the Vedic rites. The members of the fourth class, O Arjuna, have no claim to these rites, for their profession is to serve the members of the first three. They are not allowed to study the Vedas or perform Yajnas. There is organisation of mankind into the four castes and each man's life is divided into four stages, according to the nature of the Gunas and the degree of the growth or evolution. I will now explain the specific duties of these castes according to the qualities by means of which, freeing themselves from the grip of birth and death, they can attain Self-realisation or knowledge of the Self. Passion (Rajas) slightly mingled with Tamas causes the growth of the merchant caste (the Vaisya). Rajas mixed with Tamas is the cause of the appearance of the Sudra.

The one human race has been divided into four castes based upon the three qualities. The duties are allotted to each according to the qualities born of Nature.

Nature (Svabhava) is Isvara's Prakriti (Maya) constituted of the three qualities—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

The Brahmana's nature is Sattva. So he is serene. The nature of the Kshatriya is Rajas and Sattva. Sattva in his case is subordinate to Rajas. Rajas predominates. Therefore he possesses lordliness. The nature of the Vaisya is Rajas and Tamas. Tamas is subordinate to Rajas. So he does various sorts of activities or business to earn money. The nature of the Sudra is Tamas, with subordinate Rajas. He is dull.

Karma is action arising from and fashioned by past thoughts and desires. The Gunas cannot manifest themselves without a cause. Nature is the tendency, Samskara or Vasana in living beings. This is acquired by them in the past births. This manifests itself in the present birth and produces its effects. This nature is the source of the Gunas. Every man or woman is born with his or her own Svabhava (nature). The Gunas operate according to the respective natural tendencies of man which impel him to perform his own duties as their natural effects. The duties are allotted to the four classes or castes in accordance with the Gunas of individuals. (*Cf.* IV. 13)

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥४२॥

शमः serenity, दमः self-restraint, तपः austerity, शौचम् purity, क्षान्तिः forgiveness, आर्जवम् uprightness, एव even, च and, ज्ञानम् knowledge, विज्ञानम् realisation, आस्तिक्यम् belief in God, ब्रह्मकर्म (are) the duties of Brahmanas, स्वभावजम् born of nature.

42. Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also uprightness, knowledge, realisation and belief in God are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of (their own) nature.

Commentary: *Sama* is control of the mind. *Dama* is control of the senses. *Serenity* and *self-restraint* have already been explained in XVI. 1,2. *Austerity* of the three kinds has also been explained in XVII. 14 to 16.

Astikyam: Faith in the words of the Guru, in the teachings of the scriptures, in the existence of God, in the life beyond or hereafter and in one's own Self.

The mind is absorbed in the Self. This gives peace. Self-restraint is the helpmate of peace. In obeying the injunctions of the scriptures alone you will attain peace and spiritual progress. You must not argue too much. You must have reverence for and faith in the teaching.

As the sandalwood tree is fragrant with its own sweet scent, as a Champaka tree is adorned by its lovely flowers, so also a Brahmana is adorned by these nine virtues which are inseparable from him.

Now, O Arjuna, listen to the duties of a Kshatriya.

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥४३॥

शौर्यम् prowess, तेजः splendour, धृतिः firmness, दाक्ष्यम् dexterity, युद्धे in battle, च and, अपि also, अपलायनम् not fleeing, दानम् generosity, ईश्वरभावः lordliness, च and, क्षात्रम् of Kshatriyas, कर्म action, स्वभावजम् born of nature.

43. Prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity and also not fleeing from battle, generosity and lordliness are the duties of the Kshatriyas, born of (their own) nature.

Commentary: It is the first duty of Kshatriya (man of the warrior class or of royal blood) to be brave and chivalrous. Bravery is that sublime virtue through which one is naturally strong, vigorous and courageous. In the face of the most terrible calamity the mind will not be in the least perturbed. The Kshatriya is firm under any unfavourable or trying conditions or circumstances. He does not get the least depression of spirit even when he is in adverse circumstances. It is the skill by which the reason finds out its path amidst all untoward circumstances and eventually attains its goal. This is firmness, fortitude or courage.

Dakshya: Promptness: He is able to decide rightly on the spot in matters that demand prompt attention; doing without confusion, of duties which present themselves all of a sudden and demand prompt action.

As the sunflower always turns its face towards the sun so does he always face his enemies. He will ever avoid turning his back to them on the field of battle. He is absolutely fearless. Just as a tree gives away its flowers and fruits freely to whoever desires them, as the jasmine sends out its sweet fragrance in every direction, so will a Kshatriya generously give to another whatever may be asked of him. His charity is boundless.

Lordliness: A Kshatriya king enjoys sovereignty over his subjects owing to the sure protection he grants them, exercises ruling power over his subjects who are to be ruled, and raises the rod of chastisement to punish the unrighteous or the wicked.

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ।।४४।।

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यम् agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade, वैश्यकर्म the duties of Vaisya, स्वभावजम् born of nature, परिचर्यात्मकम् consisting of service, कर्म action, शूद्रस्य of the Sudra, अपि also, स्वभावजम् born of nature.

44. Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaisya (merchant), born of (their own) nature; and action

consisting of service is the duty of the Sudra (servant-class), born of (their own) nature.

Commentary: When a man performs his duties rightly according to his caste and order of life his heart is purified and he goes to heaven. Apastambha Dharma Sutra declares, “Men of several castes and orders, each devoted to his respective duties, reap the fruits of their actions after death, and then by the residual Karma attain to births in superior countries, castes and families possessed of comparatively superior Dharma, span of life, learning, conduct, wealth, happiness and intelligence” (2, 2, 2, 3). There is a vivid description in the Puranas also of the different results and worlds which men of the four castes and orders obtain by discharging their respective duties.

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥४५॥

स्वे in own, स्वे in own, कर्मणि to duty, अभिरतः devoted, संसिद्धिम् perfection, लभते attains, नरः a man, स्वकर्मनिरतः engaged in his own duty, सिद्धिम् perfection, यथा how, विन्दति finds, तत् that, शृणु hear.

45. Each man devoted to his own duty attains perfection. How he attains perfection while being engaged in his own duty, hear now.

Commentary: This is the division of labour for which each caste is fitted according to its own nature. The duty prescribed is your sole support, and the highest service you can render to the Supreme is to carry it out whole-heartedly, without expectation of fruits, with the attitude of dedication to the Lord. This will surely lead you to the Supreme. All the impurities of the mind will be washed away by the performance of one’s own duty and you will be fit for Self-knowledge.

Sve sve karmani: Each devoted to his own duty in accordance with his nature (Guna) or caste. It is impossible to attain Moksha by works alone but works purify the heart and prepare the aspirant for receiving the divine light.

The attitude of worshipfulness is prescribed for work:

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥४६॥

यतः from whom, प्रवृत्तिः (is) the evolution, भूतानाम् of beings, येन by whom, सर्वम् all, इदम् this, ततम् is pervaded, स्वकर्मणा with his own duty, तम् Him, अभ्यर्च्य worshipping, सिद्धिम् perfection, विन्दति attains, मानवः man.

46. He from Whom all the beings have evolved and by Whom all this is pervaded—worshipping Him with his own duty, man attains perfection.

Commentary: The performance by a man of his own duty is simply carrying into effect the intention of the Supreme from Whom the whole of the creation emanates. When a man worships Him, the Supreme Being, with the flowers of his action, then He is immensely pleased and being thus gratified by such worship He confers on him, as a boon, dispassion and discrimination.

Pravritti: Evolution or activity; it proceeds from the Lord, the Antaryamin, the Inner Ruler.

Bhutanam: Beings; living creatures.

Svakarmana: With his own duty; each according to his caste as described above.

Man attains perfection by worshipping the Lord by performing his own duty, i.e., he becomes qualified for the dawn of Self-knowledge (for Jnana Yoga).

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥४७॥

श्रेयान् better, स्वधर्मः one's own duty, विगुणः (though) destitute of merits, परधर्मात् that the duty of another, स्वनुष्ठितात् (than) well performed, स्वभावनियतम् ordained by his own nature, कर्म action, कुर्वन् doing, न not, आप्नोति (he) incurs, किल्बिषम् sin.

47. Better is one's own duty (though) destitute of merits, than the duty of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin.

Commentary: Just as a poisonous substance does not harm the worm born in that substance, so he who does his Svadharma (the duty ordained according to his own nature) does not incur any sin.

What is poison to the whole world is sweet to a worm and yet sugarcane juice that is sweet causes its death. So a man's appointed duty which frees him from bondage must, therefore, be practised however difficult it may seem to be. If you try to do the duty of another it will bring danger. He who has no knowledge of the Self cannot remain even for a moment without doing action. *(Cf.* III. 35)

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥४८॥

सहजम् which is born, कर्म action, कौन्तेय O Kaunteya, सदोषम् with fault, अपि even, न not, त्यजेत् (one) should abandon, सर्वारम्भाः all undertakings, हि for, दोषेण by evil, धूमेन by smoke, अग्निः fire, इव like, आवृताः are enveloped.

48. One should not abandon, O Arjuna, the duty to which one is born, though faulty; for, all undertakings are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke.

Commentary: *Sahajam:* Born with oneself; born with the birth of man.

Sadosham: Faulty; for everything is constituted of the three Gunas.

All undertakings: One's own as well as others' duties.

If a Vaisya or a Kshatriya does the duties of a Brahmana he will not in any way be benefited. Another's duty brings in fear. Therefore it is not proper to perform another's duty. It is not possible for any man who has no knowledge of the Self to relinquish action totally; therefore he should not abandon action.

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥४९॥

असक्तबुद्धिः whose intellect is unattached, सर्वत्र everywhere, जितात्मा who has subdued his self, विगतस्पृहः whose desire has fled,

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिम् the perfection consisting in freedom from action, परमाम् the supreme, संन्यासेन by renunciation, अधिगच्छति (he) attains.

49. He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who has subdued his self, from whom desire has fled,—he by renunciation, attains the supreme state of freedom from action.

Commentary: The mind of one who is free from attachment to wife, son, body and property, who has controlled his senses and the mind, who has no desire for the body, for life and for sensual pleasure, turns inwards towards God or the immortal Self. It is not attracted by the sensual objects of the world. It is filled with dispassion and discrimination.

He gradually gets himself established in his own Self which is of the nature of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. Such a person who has knowledge of the Self attains to the highest perfection, to perfect freedom from action by renunciation.

Ignorance is destroyed by the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. There is cessation of activity. One may perform actions for the solidarity of the world and yet he will not be bound by actions as he has attained absolute freedom from action through the knowledge of the Self. The fire of knowledge has burnt the fruit-bearing effects of Karmas or actions. He has no idea of agency as he is absolutely free from egoism, as he has identified himself with the Supreme Being.

Naishkarmya siddhi may also mean the attainment of the state of Naishkarmya. In this exalted, magnanimous, ineffable state of divine splendour and glory, one remains as the actionless Self. This is the state of immediate liberation of the Vedantins (Kaivalya Moksha or Sadyomukti). This marvellous state is attained by renunciation or right knowledge or by the renunciation of all actions brought about by the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. "Mentally renouncing all actions and self-controlled, the embodied one rests happily in the nine-gated city, neither acting nor causing others to act." (*Cf.* V. 13)

Now the Lord teaches in the next verse how a man who, having attained perfection as described above in verse 46, by doing his duty in the service of the Lord can attain perfect freedom from action. He gets discrimination, practises constant meditation and rests in the knowledge of the immutable Self. (*Cf.* III. 4 and 19)

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥५०॥

सिद्धिम् perfection, प्राप्तः attained, यथा as, ब्रह्म Brahman (the Eternal), तथा so, आप्नोति obtains, निबोध learn, मे of Me, समासेन in brief, एव even, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti, निष्ठा state, ज्ञानस्य of knowledge, या or, परा highest.

50. Learn from Me in brief, O Arjuna, how he who has attained perfection reaches Brahman (the Eternal), that supreme state of knowledge.

Commentary: When a man has the good fortune to hear the words of wisdom from a teacher, dualism and egoism vanish and his mind rests in union with the Supreme Being. The need for action no longer exists for such a man. Nothing further remains for him to do. He has become a Kritakritya (a man of total fulfilment, or one who has done all that there is to be done).

The aspirant obtains the grace of the Lord by worshipping Him with his proper duty. The Lord gives him dispassion, discrimination, devotion to knowledge. The Lord removes his veil of ignorance. "To these ever harmonious, worshipping in love, I give the Yoga of discrimination by which they come unto Me. Out of My mere compassion for them, I, dwelling within their Self, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the luminous lamp of knowledge." (X. 10 and 11)

The perfection is Jnana-Nishtha or devotion to knowledge by which he attains Self-realisation or becomes identical with the Supreme Being when the veil of ignorance is rent asunder. The way to the attainment of this devotion to knowledge will be described only in a succinct manner. The process or method of Self-realisation will be described only in brief in the following verses.

The actual technique has to be learnt direct from a Guru.

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्याऽऽत्मानं नियम्य च ।
शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥५१॥

बुद्ध्या with an intellect, विशुद्धया pure, युक्तः endowed, धृत्या by firmness, आत्मानम् the self, नियम्य controlling, च and, शब्दादीन् sound and other, विषयान् sense-objects, त्यक्त्वा relinquishing, रागद्वेषौ attraction and hatred, व्युदस्य abandoning, च and.

51. Endowed with a pure intellect, controlling the self by firmness, relinquishing sound and other objects and abandoning attraction and hatred,

Commentary: The lower self should be controlled with firmness by the Self of pure intellect. The turbulent senses and the mind should be subdued with the help of the pure intellect or reason. Pure reason is a great power. Whenever the senses raise their heads and hiss, they should be hammered by the powerful rod of pure intellect or reason. Reason is the faculty of determination.

Pure intellect: The intellect that is free from lust, anger, greed, pride, doubt, misconception, etc. It is like a clear mirror. A pure intellect is Brahman Itself. It can be easily merged in Brahman. When the pure intellect is merged in Brahman, the reflected intelligence, Chidabhasa or Jiva, is also absorbed in Brahman. The Jiva becomes identical with Brahman, just as the ether in the pot becomes one with the universal ether when the pot is broken.

The self: The aggregate of the body and the senses.

The aspirant withdraws the senses from their respective objects again and again through the repeated practice of Pratyahara (abstraction) and Dama (self-restraint). Gradually the senses are fixed in the Self. Their outgoing tendencies are totally curbed. The aspirant attains supreme control of the senses by constant meditation, by the practice of dispassion he conquers Raga (attachment), and through the practice of pure love or cosmic love or divine Prema he conquers hatred.

He abandons all luxuries. He keeps only those objects which are necessary for the bare maintenance of the body. He has neither attachment nor hatred even for those objects which are necessary for that purpose.

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥५२॥

विविक्तसेवी dwelling in solitude, लघ्वाशी eating but little, यतवाक्कायमानसः speech, body and mind subdued, ध्यानयोगपरः engaged in meditation and concentration, नित्यम् always, वैराग्यम् dispassion, समुपाश्रितः resorting to.

52. Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, with speech, body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, resorting to dispassion.

Commentary: Solitude has its own charms. The spiritual vibrations in solitude are wonderfully elevating. Meditation will come by itself without exertion. All saints and sages who have attained Self-realisation have remained in solitude for a number of years. You will have good meditation if you sit on the bank of a river, in a cave or on the seashore or in a jungle. During the Christmas and Easter holidays you can all enjoy the peace of solitude. It is very necessary to live in solitude at least for a month or a fortnight in a year for the householders. Instead of wasting time, energy and money in Calcutta or any other city, during the holidays, live in holy places like Rishikesh, Uttarakasi or Naimisaranya; drink the nectar of peace in such places by doing Anushthana (intense and systematic spiritual practice) or Japa of a Mantra and attain immortality. If you once taste the bliss of solitude you will never forget it. Every year you will attempt to taste it again. He who takes too much food (a glutton) is quite unfit for meditation or the spiritual path. Too much food will produce laziness, a half-sleepy state and deep sleep also. Eat to live. Eat in moderation. You will have a light body and light, cheerful and serene mind. This will help you in your practice of meditation. Observe Mauna or the vow of silence for a week or a month. Observe the vow for two hours daily. Control the body. Practise Ahimsa and Brahmacharya. Meditate on Self or on the Lord Hari with four hands, or on Lord Krishna, Rama or Siva. Be regular in your meditation and gradually increase the period of meditation from 15 minutes to 3 or 6 hours at a sitting. If you are a whole-timed aspirant, spend the whole time in meditation. If you are not able to do this, do Likhita Japa (writing the Mantra) and Kirtan (singing the Names and glories of the Lord). Study religious books in the interval. Only advanced aspirants can meditate for a long time. Watch the mind and cultivate dispassion. Energy will leak out through the senses if you are careless and non-vigilant. If energy leaks out, you cannot have good meditation. Dispassion is indifference to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter, absence of desire for visible and invisible objects. You must have steady, lasting and sustained dispassion. It should not wane. It should be a constant attitude of the mind. You must be fully established in dispassion.

In doing the Anushthana for 40 days live on milk and fruits or light diet. Take only 3 or 4 articles of food. Take one meal only. Sleep on the floor. Observe celibacy and the vow of silence. Do not come out of the room. Speak little if you do not observe perfect silence. Do the Anushthana on the banks of the Ganga or any sacred river. Try to do one or several Purascharanas of your Ishta Mantra. If there are five letters (syllables in English) in the Mantra, 500,000 repetitions of the Mantra will constitute one Purascharana.

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥५३॥

अहङ्कारम् egoism, बलम् strength, दर्पम् arrogance, कामम् desire, क्रोधम् anger, परिग्रहम् covetousness, विमुच्य having abandoned, निर्ममः without mineness, शान्तः peaceful, ब्रह्मभूयाय for becoming Brahman, कल्पते (he) is fit.

53. Having abandoned egoism, strength, arrogance, desire, anger and covetousness, and free from the notion of 'mine' and peaceful,—he is fit for becoming Brahman.

Commentary: *Egoism:* Identifying the Self with the body, etc. This is the error of mistaking the physical body for the pure immortal Self.

Balam: That strength which is combined or united with passion, desire and attachment, and not the physical or other strength. Physical strength is natural. It is not possible to abandon this physical strength.

Darpam: Arrogance, insolence, self-assertive Rajasic vehemence; this follows the state of exaltation. Man becomes arrogant when he possesses wealth or much learning. When he becomes arrogant he violates Dharma and does wicked deeds.

The aspirant even abandons the things which are necessary for the bare maintenance of the body. He becomes a Paramahamsa-Parivrajaka, a wandering or itinerant ascetic. He has no attachment to his body. He knows that even the body does not belong to him.

Santa: Peaceful, tranquil, serene.

Such an aspirant who has devotion to Self-knowledge, and who is endowed with the above virtues is fit to become Brahman.

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥५४॥

ब्रह्मभूतः having become Brahman, प्रसन्नात्मा serene-minded, न not, शोचति (he) grieves, न not, काङ्क्षति desires, समः the same, सर्वेषु all, भूतेषु in beings, मद्भक्तिम् devotion unto Me, लभते obtains, पराम् supreme.

54. Becoming Brahman, serene in the Self, he neither grieves nor desires, the same to all beings, he obtains supreme devotion to Me.

Commentary: *Brahmabhutah:* Having attained to Brahman. His attainment of perfect freedom or oneness with the Supreme is described in the next verse.

He is tranquil-minded. He is in a state of balance and equanimity. There is nothing connected with the little personality that may cause him to grieve or prompt him to feel desire. When this state is attained, the multiplicity of objects gradually disappears and he perceives only unity everywhere. The waking and dream consciousness that gives rise to false knowledge gradually passes away.

He does not grieve about his bodily wants. If he fails in his attempt to fulfil them, he does not grieve either. He always keeps evenness of mind in success and failure. He has no longing for any object that is not attained.

Na sochati na kankshati can also be interpreted as "he neither grieves nor exults."

Samah sarveshu bhuteshu may also mean "he puts himself in the position of others and feels for others." If anyone is in acute agony or distress, he himself feels that he is affected. His heart is very tender and soft. He is extremely compassionate and merciful. He considers that the pleasure and pain of all beings are his own. If others rejoice he also rejoices; if others are in distress, he also is distressed. His heart is so much expanded that he feels for all. Jealousy, narrowness of heart, petty-mindedness, the idea of separateness, all barriers that separate man from man, prejudices of all sorts and dislike for others—all vanished *in toto*. He has cosmic love. He is a cosmic benefactor. He is the friend of all. This state of expansion is beyond description. One has to experience it for oneself. Such a devotee or aspirant attains supreme devotion to Me, the fourth or the highest of the four kinds of devotion mentioned in verse 16 of chapter VII, viz., devotion of knowledge of the man of wisdom. (*Cf.* II. 70)

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥५५॥

भक्त्या by devotion, माम् Me, अभिजानाति (he) knows, यावान् what, यः who, च and, अस्मि (I) am, तत्त्वतः in truth, ततः then, माम् Me, तत्त्वतः in truth, ज्ञात्वा having known, विशते (he) enters, तत् that, अनन्तरम् afterwards.

55. By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then having known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into the Supreme.

Commentary: My devotee, O Arjuna, who has attained to union with Me through single-minded and unflinching devotion is verily My very Self. Devotion culminates in knowledge. Devotion begins with two and ends in one. Para-Bhakti (supreme devotion) and Jnana are one. Devotion is the mother. Knowledge is the son. By devotion he knows that I am all-pervading pure consciousness; he knows that I am non-dual, unborn, decayless, causeless, self-luminous, indivisible, unchanging; he knows that I am destitute of all the differences caused by the limiting adjuncts; he knows that I am the support, source, womb, basis, and substratum of everything; he knows that I am the ruler of all beings; he knows that I am the Supreme Purusha, the controller of Maya, and that this world is a mere appearance. Thus knowing Me in truth or in essence, he enters into Me soon after attaining Self-knowledge.

The act of 'knowing' and the act of 'entering' are not two distinct acts. Knowing is becoming. Knowing is attaining Self-knowledge. To know That is to become That. Entering is knowing or becoming That. Entering is the attainment of Self-knowledge or Self-realisation. These are all jugglery of words only. Knowing and entering are synonymous terms. It is very difficult to understand or comprehend transcendental spiritual matters. The teachers use various terms or expressions, analogies, similes, parables, stories, etc., to make the aspirant grasp the matter clearly and lucidly. Words are imperfect and languages are defective. They cannot fully express the inner spiritual experiences. The teacher somehow or other expresses to the students or aspirants these spiritual ideas. The aspirant himself will have to realise the Self. That is beyond the reach of words or expressions or analogies or similes. How can there be similes for that non-dual Brahman? These 'words' are a sort of help or prop for the aspirants to lean upon in the beginning to understand spiritual matters. When he realises the Self, these words are of no value to him. He himself becomes an embodiment of knowledge.

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥५६॥

सर्वकर्माणि all actions, अपि also, सदा always, कुर्वाणः doing, मद्व्यपाश्रयः taking refuge in Me, मत्प्रसादात् by My grace, अवाप्नोति obtains, शाश्वतम् the eternal, पदम् state or abode, अव्ययम् indestructible.

56. Doing all actions always having taken refuge in Me, by My grace he obtains the eternal indestructible state of being.

Commentary: Worshipping Me with the flowers of his good actions he reaches the imperishable Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour through My grace. He attains union with Me and enjoys the supreme bliss. If by chance he commits some prohibited actions, still, as in the Ganga (India's most holy river) the waters of the drains and roads find union, so My devotee, becoming united with Me, is unaffected by these prohibited actions.

Worship of the Lord through one's duties purifies the heart of the aspirant and prepares him for the devotion to knowledge which eventually leads him to the attainment of Self-realisation. The Yoga of Devotion is eulogised here.

All actions: Good actions and even the prohibited actions. He who takes shelter in Me, Vaasudeva, the Lord, with his whole self centred in Me attains the eternal abode of Vishnu, by the grace of the Lord.

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ।।५७।।

चेतसा mentally, सर्वकर्माणि all actions, मयि in Me, संन्यस्य resigning, मत्परः having Me as the highest goal, बुद्धियोगम् the Yoga of discrimination, उपाश्रित्य resorting to, मच्चित्तः with the mind fixed on Me, सततम् always, भव be.

57. Mentally renouncing all actions in Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to the Yoga of discrimination do thou ever fix thy mind on Me.

Commentary: Do thou, O Arjuna, surrender all thy actions to Me whilst at the same time fixing thy mind on discrimination. Then through that discrimination thou wilt see thy Self as separate from the body and activity and existing in My pure Being.

Chetasa: Mentally; with the discriminative faith that knowledge finally leads to liberation when the heart is purified through selfless works done with the spirit of offering to God.

Sarvakarmani: All actions producing visible and invisible results.

Me: The Lord: As taught in verse 27 of chapter IX; Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, etc., do thou dedicate all thy actions to Me.

Matparah: Taking Me, Vaasudeva, as the supreme goal, and his whole self centred in Me.

Resorting to Buddhi Yoga: As thy sole refuge; steady-mindedness.

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।
अथ चेत्त्वमहङ्कारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि ॥५८॥

मच्चित्तः fixing thy mind on Me, सर्वदुर्गाणि all obstacles, मत्प्रसादात् by My grace, तरिष्यसि (thou) shalt overcome, अथ now, चेत् if, त्वम् thou, अहङ्कारात् from egoism, न not, श्रोष्यसि (thou) wilt hear, विनङ्क्ष्यसि (thou) shalt perish.

58. Fixing thy mind on Me, thou shalt by My grace overcome all obstacles; but if from egoism thou wilt not hear Me, thou shalt perish.

Commentary: When thy mind, O Arjuna, through one-pointed devotion is fixed on Me, thou shalt by My grace cross over all difficulties and obstacles. But shouldst thou not take My teaching to heart and through pride disregard it, thou shalt be ruined.

Difficulties: Obstacles, snares, pitfalls, temptations on the spiritual path and various sorts of other difficulties of Samsara, diseases, etc.

Egoism: The idea that thou art a learned man. Thou shouldst not think: "I am independent. I know everything. I am a wise man. Why should I take the advice of another?"

यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥५९॥

यत् if, अहङ्कारम् egoism, आश्रित्य having taken refuge in, न not, योत्स्ये (I) will fight, इति thus, मन्यसे (thou) thinkest, मिथ्या vain, एषः this, व्यवसायः resolve, ते thy, प्रकृतिः nature, त्वाम् thee, नियोक्ष्यति will compel.

59. If, filled with egoism, thou thinkest: "I will not fight", vain is this, thy resolve; Nature will compel thee.

Commentary: This strong determination of thy mind will be rendered utterly futile by thy inner nature; thy nature will constrain thee; thy nature as a warrior will compel thee to fight. It is a mere illusion to say that thou art Arjuna, that these are thy relatives and that to kill them will be a sin.

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥६०॥

स्वभावजेन born of (thy) own nature, कौन्तेय O son of Kunti, निबद्धः bound, स्वेन (thy) own, कर्मणा by action, कर्तुम् to do, न not, इच्छसि (thou) wishest, यत् which, मोहात् from delusion, करिष्यसि (thou) shalt do, अवशः helpless, अपि also, तत् that.

60. O Arjuna, bound by thy own Karma (action) born of thy own nature, that which from delusion thou wishest not to do even that thou shalt do helplessly.

Commentary: Thou art endowed, O Arjuna, with martial qualities, prowess, valour, skill, etc. Thou art, therefore, bound by these innate qualities. Thou wilt be forced to fight by thy own nature. Nature will constrain thee to fight, much against thy will.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥६१॥

ईश्वरः the Lord, सर्वभूतानाम् of all beings, हृद्देशे in the hearts, अर्जुन O Arjuna, तिष्ठति dwells, भ्रामयन् causing to revolve, सर्वभूतानि all beings, यन्त्रारूढानि mounted on a machine, मायया by illusion.

61. The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, causing all beings, by His illusive power, to revolve as if mounted on a machine.

Commentary: *Isvara:* The Lord; the Ruler of the universe; Narayana.

The Lord abides in the hearts of all beings. It is He Who has given a gift of this marvellous machine to you. It is by His power that all bodies move. The Lord is the real Actor within.

By Maya: By causing illusion.

He causes all beings to revolve like wooden dolls mounted on a machine. (*Cf.* X. 20; XIII. 18)

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ।।६२।।

तम् to Him, एव even, शरणम् गच्छ take refuge, सर्वभावेन with all thy being, भारत O Bharata, तत्प्रसादात् by His grace, पराम् supreme, शान्तिम् peace, स्थानम् the abode, प्राप्स्यसि (thou) shalt obtain, शाश्वतम् eternal.

62. Fly unto Him for refuge with all thy being, O Arjuna; by His grace thou shalt obtain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode.

Commentary: Do total and perfect surrender to the Lord. Do not keep any secret desires for silent gratification. Desire and egoism are the two chief obstacles that stand in the way of self-surrender. Kill them ruthlessly.

Run to the Lord for shelter with all thy being for freeing thyself from the troubles, afflictions and sorrows of Samsara. Take the Lord as the sole refuge. Then by His grace, thou shalt obtain supreme peace and attain to the supreme, eternal Abode.

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ।।६३।।

इति thus, ते to thee, ज्ञानम् wisdom, आख्यातम् has been declared, गुह्यात् than the secret, गुह्यतरम् more secret, मया by Me, विमृश्य reflecting over, एतत् this, अशेषेण fully, यथा as, इच्छसि (thou) wishest, तथा so, कुरु act.

63. Thus has wisdom, more secret than secrecy itself, been declared unto thee by Me; having reflected over it fully, then act as thou wishest.

Commentary: Thus has wisdom, more profound than all secrets, been declared to thee by Me. This teaching is well known as the Gita, the essence of all the Vedas. If anyone follows it and lives in the spirit of this teaching he will certainly attain supreme peace, highest knowledge and immortality. There is no doubt about this. I have revealed the mystery of this secret treasure to thee as thou art dear to Me, O Arjuna.

It: The teaching declared above. Reflect fully over everything that has been taught to thee.

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥६४॥

सर्वगुह्यतमम् the most secret of all, भूयः again, शृणु hear, मे My, परमम् supreme, वचः word, इष्टः beloved, असि (thou) art, मे of Me, दृढम् dearly, इति thus, ततः therefore, वक्ष्यामि (I) will speak, ते thy, हितम् what is good.

64. Hear thou again My supreme word, most secret of all; because thou art dearly beloved of Me, I will tell thee what is good.

Commentary: Now listen once more with rapt attention to My words. Thou art very dear to Me. Thou art a sincere aspirant. Therefore I am telling thee this most mysterious truth. Hear from Me this mystery of all mysteries. I shall tell it to you again to make a deep impression on your mind, although it has been declared more than once. I do not hope to get any reward from thee. Thou art My most beloved friend and disciple. Therefore I will speak what is good for thee, the means of attaining Self-realisation. This is the supreme good or the highest of all kinds of good for thee.

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥६५॥

मन्मनाः with mind fixed on Me, भव be, मद्भक्तः devoted to Me, मद्याजी sacrifice to Me, माम् to Me, नमस्कुरु bow down, माम् to Me, एव even, एष्यसि (thou) shalt come, सत्यम् truth, ते to thee, प्रतिजाने (I) promise, प्रियः dear, असि (thou) art, मे of Me.

65. Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt come even to Me; truly do I promise unto thee, (for) thou art dear to Me.

Commentary: Develop one-pointedness of mind. Fix thy thought on Me. If the mind wanders bring it again and again to the centre or point or object of meditation, through constant practice. Offer all thy actions to Me. Let thy tongue utter My name. Let thy hands work for Me. Let thy feet move for Me. Let all thy actions be for Me. Give up hatred towards any living creature. Bow down to Me. Then thou wilt attain Me.

The Lord gives Arjuna His definite word of promise or solemn declaration. Having received My grace thou wilt gain complete knowledge of Me and that in itself will indeed lead to thy absorption into My Being.

O Arjuna, looking up to Me alone as thy aim and the sole refuge, thou shalt assuredly come to Me.

Have faith in the words of the Lord and make a solemn promise. Take the Lord as your sole refuge. You will attain final emancipation.

The secret of devotion is to take the Lord as your sole refuge. In the next verse the Lord proceeds to speak of the gist of self-surrender. (*Cf.* IX. 34; XII. 8)

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥६६॥

सर्वधर्मान् all duties, परित्यज्य having abandoned, माम् to Me, एकम् alone, शरणम् refuge, व्रज take, अहम् I, त्वा thee, सर्वपापेभ्यः from all sins, मोक्षयिष्यामि will liberate, मा don't, शुचः grieve.

66. Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone: I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.

Commentary: This is the answer given by the Lord to the question put by Arjuna in chapter II, verse 7: "I ask Thee which may be the better; tell me that decidedly. I am Thy disciple, suppliant to Thee; teach me."

All Dharmas: Righteous deeds, including Adharma; all actions, righteous or unrighteous, as absolute freedom from all actions is intended to be taught here.

Taking refuge in Me alone implies the knowledge of unity without any thought of duality; knowing that there is nothing else except Me, the Self of all, dwelling the same in all. If thou art established in this faith, I shall liberate thee from all sins, from all bonds of Dharma and Adharma by manifesting Myself as thy own Self.

To behold forms is the Dharma of the eye. The support or substratum of all forms is Brahman. When you look at an object behold Brahman Which is the one essence and abandon the form as it is illusory and unreal. Have the same attitude towards the other objects which pertain to the other senses.

Give up the Jiva-Dharma (the notions: "I am the doer of actions. I enjoy. I am a Brahmana. I am a Brahmachari. I am endowed with a little knowledge and power, etc." and get yourself established in Brahma-Bhavana (the understanding or knowledge "I am Brahman"). This is what is meant by taking refuge in Lord Krishna, according to the Vedantins.

Work ceaselessly for the Lord but surrender the fruits of all actions to the Lord. Take the Lord as your sole refuge. Live for Him. Work for Him. Serve Him in all forms. Think of Him only. Meditate on Him alone. See Him everywhere. Worship Him in your heart. Consecrate your life, all actions, feelings and thoughts to the Lord. You will rest in Him. You will attain union with Him. You will attain immortal supreme peace and eternal bliss. This is the view of another school of thought.

Sri Sankara very strongly refutes the idea that knowledge in conjunction with Karma (action) produces or leads to liberation. He says that Karma and knowledge may not go together in the same man, that karma helps the man to get purification of the heart, and that right knowledge of the Self alone will give him absolute freedom from Samsara. He says that work and knowledge are like darkness and light, that action is possible only in this universe of illusory phenomena which is the projection of ignorance; and knowledge dispels this ignorance. (*Cf.* III. 30; IX. 22)

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।
न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥६७॥

इदम् this, ते by thee, न not, अतपस्काय to one who is devoid of austerity, न not, अभक्ताय to one who is not devoted, कदाचन never, न not, च and, अशुश्रूषवे to one who does not render service or who does not desire to listen, वाच्यम् to be spoken, न not, च and, माम् Me, यः who, अभ्यसूयति cavils at.

67. This is never to be spoken by thee to one who is devoid of austerities or devotion, nor to one who does not render service or who does not desire to listen, nor to one who cavils at Me.

Commentary: *This:* The scripture which has been taught to you.

Service: To the Guru.

The scripture can be taught to him who does not speak ill of the Lord, who is a man of austerities, who is devoted, who is thirsting to hear and who renders service to his Guru.

One who cavils at Me: He who disregards Me taking Me for an ordinary man, who does not like to be told that I am the Lord.

य इमं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥६८॥

यः who, इमम् this, परमम् supreme, गुह्यम् secret, मद्भक्तेषु in My devotees, अभिधास्यति shall declare, भक्तिम् devotion, मयि in Me, पराम् supreme, कृत्वा having done, माम् to Me, एव even, एष्यति shall come, असंशयः doubtless.

68. He who with supreme devotion to Me will teach this supreme secret to My devotees, shall doubtlessly come to Me.

Commentary: *This supreme secret:* The teachings of the Gita as taught above in the form of a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. Why is it called a supreme secret? Because it helps one to attain immortality or freedom from the wheel of birth and death.

He alone, who has devotion, is qualified to receive the teachings of the Gita.

Teach with the faith that he is thus doing service to the Lord, the Supreme Teacher.

Doubtless may also mean ‘freedom from doubts’.

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ।।६९।।

न not, च and, तस्मात् than he, मनुष्येषु among men, कश्चित् any, मे of Me, प्रियकृत्तमः one who does dearer service, भविता shall be, न not, च and, मे of Me, तस्मात् than he, अन्यः another, प्रियतरः dearer, भुवि on the earth.

69. Nor is there any among men who does dearer service to Me, nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than he.

Commentary: He who hands down this Gita to My devotees does immense service to Me. He is very dear to Me. There is none in the present generation who does dearer service to Me, nor shall there be in future also in this world.

Bhuvi: On earth; in this world.

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ।।७०।।

अध्येष्यते shall study, च and, यः who, इमम् this, धर्म्यम् sacred, संवादम् dialogue, आवयोः of ours, ज्ञानयज्ञेन by the sacrifice of wisdom, तेन by him, अहम् I, इष्टः worshipped, स्याम् (I) shall have been, इति thus, मे My, मतिः conviction.

70. And he who will study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I shall have been worshipped by the sacrifice of wisdom,—such is My conviction.

Commentary: There are four kinds of sacrifice—Vidhi, Japa, Upamsu and Manasa. Vidhi is ritual. Japa is recitation of a Mantra. Upamsu is Japa done in a whisper. Of the four kinds, Jnana-Yajna or the wisdom-sacrifice comes under Manasa and is, therefore, the highest. The Gita is eulogised as a Jnana-Yajna. He who studies this scripture with faith and devotion will attain the fruit that is equal to that of performing Jnana-Yajna or meditation on a deity and the like.

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाँल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।।७१।।

श्रद्धावान् full of faith, अनसूयः free from malice, च and, शृणुयात् may hear, अपि also, यः who, नरः man, सः he, अपि also, मुक्तः liberated, शुभान् happy, लोकान् worlds, प्राप्नुयात् shall attain, पुण्यकर्मणाम् of those of righteous deeds.

71. Also the man who hears this, full of faith and free from malice, he, too, liberated, shall attain to the happy worlds of those of righteous deeds.

Commentary: *Liberated* from sin.

Punyakarmanam: Of those who have done Agnihotra and such other sacrifices.

He too: Much more so who understands the teachings of the Gita, who lives in its spirit and who practises the most valuable spiritual instructions contained in it.

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।
कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥७२॥

कच्चित् whether, एतत् this, श्रुतम् heard, पार्थ O son of Kunti (Arjuna), त्वया by thee, एकाग्रेण one-pointed, चेतसा by mind, कच्चित् whether, अज्ञानसंमोहः the delusion of ignorance, प्रनष्टः has been destroyed, ते thy, धनञ्जय O Dhananjaya.

72. Has this been heard, O Arjuna, with one-pointed mind? Has the delusion of thy ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya?

Commentary: It is the duty of the spiritual teacher or preceptor to make the aspirant understand the teaching of the scripture and to enable him to attain the goal of life (Moksha). If the student has not grasped the subject he will have to explain it in some other way with similes, analogies and illustrations. That is the reason why Lord Krishna asks Arjuna: "Has the delusion of thy ignorance been destroyed?"

This: What I have told thee.

Have you heard it, O Arjuna, with one-pointed mind? Have you grasped My teaching?

Delusion of ignorance: The absence of discrimination which is caused by ignorance and which is natural. The destruction of delusion is the aim of all this endeavour on your part to hear the scripture and the exertion on My part as the teacher.

अर्जुन उवाच

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ।।७३

नष्टः is destroyed, मोहः delusion, स्मृतिः memory (knowledge), लब्धा has been gained, त्वत्प्रसादात् through Thy grace, मया by me, अच्युत O Krishna, स्थितः अस्मि I remain, गतसन्देहः freed from doubts, करिष्ये (I) will do, वचनम् word, तव Thy.

Arjuna said:

73. Destroyed is my delusion as I have gained my knowledge (memory) through Thy grace, O Krishna. I remain freed from doubts. I will act according to Thy word.

Commentary: *Moha:* Delusion: This is the strongest weapon of Maya to take the Jivas in Her clutch. It is born of ignorance. It is the cause of the whole evil of Samsara. It is as hard to cross as the ocean.

Smritih: I have attained knowledge of the true nature of the Self. The whole aim of Sadhana or spiritual practice and the study of scriptures is the annihilation of delusion and the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. When one gets it, the three knots or ties of ignorance, viz., ignorance, delusion (desire) and action are destroyed, all the doubts are cleared, and all the Karmas are destroyed.

"To him who beholds the Self in all beings, what delusion is there, what grief?" (Isavasya Upanishad, 7)

I shall do Thy word: Arjuna means to say, "I am firm in Thy command. Through Thy grace I have achieved the end of life. I have nothing more to do."

सञ्जय उवाच

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ।।७४।।

इति thus, अहम् I, वासुदेवस्य of Krishna, पार्थस्य of Arjuna, च and, महात्मनः high-souled, संवादम् dialogue, इमम् this, अश्रौषम् (I) have heard, अद्भुतम् wonderful, रोमहर्षणम् which causes the hair to stand on end.

Sanjaya said:

74. Thus I have heard this wonderful dialogue between Krishna and the high-souled Arjuna, which causes the hair to stand on end.

Commentary: *Wonderful* because it deals with Yoga and transcendental spiritual matters that pertain to the mysterious immortal Self.

Whenever good, higher emotions manifest themselves in the heart the hair stands on end. Devotees often experience this horripilation.

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यमहं परम् ।
योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥७५॥

व्यासप्रसादात् through the grace of Vyasa, श्रुतवान् have heard, एतत् this, गुह्यम् secret, अहम् I, परम् supreme, योगम् Yoga, योगेश्वरात् from the Lord of Yoga, कृष्णात् from Krishna, साक्षात् directly, कथयतः declaring, स्वयम् Himself.

75. Through the grace of Vyasa I have heard this supreme and most secret Yoga direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it.

Commentary: *Through the grace of Vyasa:* By obtaining the divine eye from him.

Yoga: This dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I have heard it direct from Him. This dialogue is called Yoga because it treats of Yoga and it leads to the attainment of union with the Lord.

राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम् ।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥७६॥

राजन् O King, संस्मृत्य having remembered, संस्मृत्य having remembered, संवादम् the dialogue, इमम् this, अद्भुतम् wonderful,

केशवार्जुनयोः between Kesava and Arjuna, पुण्यम् holy, हृष्यामि (I) rejoice, च and, मुहुः again, मुहुः again.

76. O King, remembering this wonderful and holy dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.

Commentary: *Rajan:* King Dhritarashtra to whom the Gita is narrated by Sanjaya.

Punyam: Holy because the mere hearing of the dialogue destroys a multitude of sins and makes the hearer pious and God-fearing and turns his mind towards God.

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।
विस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥७७॥

तत् that, च and, संस्मृत्य having remembered, संस्मृत्य having remembered, रूपम् the form, अत्यद्भुतम् the most wonderful, हरेः of Hari, विस्मयः wonder, मे my, महान् great, राजन् O King, हृष्यामि (I) rejoice, च and, पुनः again, पुनः again.

77. And, remembering again and again, also that most wonderful form of Hari, great is my wonder, O King; and I rejoice again and again.

Commentary: *Form:* The Cosmic Form. (*Cf.* XI)

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥७८॥

यत्र wherever, योगेश्वरः the Lord of Yoga, कृष्णः Krishna, यत्र wherever, पार्थः Arjuna, धनुर्धरः the archer, तत्र there श्रीः prosperity, विजयः victory, भूतिः happiness, ध्रुवा firm, नीतिः policy, मतिः conviction, मम my.

78. Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga; wherever is Arjuna, the wielder of the bow; there are prosperity, victory, happiness and firm policy; such is my conviction.

Commentary: This verse is called the *Ekasloki Gita*, i.e., Bhagavad Gita in one verse. Repetition of even this one verse bestows the benefits of reading the whole of the scripture.

Wherever: On that side on which.

Yogesvarah: The Lord of Yoga. Krishna is called the Lord of Yogas as the seed of all Yogas comes forth from Him.

Dhanurdharah: The wielder of the bow called the Gandiva.

There: On the side of the Pandavas.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
मोक्षसंन्यासयोगो नाम अष्टादशोऽध्यायः॥

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the eighteenth discourse entitled:

The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation.

OM SHANTIH! SHANTIH! SHANTIH!

APPENDICES

I

THE LORD'S COMMANDMENTS IN THE GITA

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥

1. Yield not to impotence, O Partha! It does not befit thee. Cast off this mean weakness of heart! Stand up, O Parantapa! (II. 3)

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥

2. The contacts of senses with objects, O son of Kunti, which cause heat and cold, pleasure and pain, have a beginning and an end; they are impermanent; bear them bravely, O Bharata. (II. 14)

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥

3. These bodies of the embodied Self, Which is Eternal, Indestructible, Immeasurable, are said to have an end. Therefore fight, O Bharata. (II. 18)

हतो वा प्राप्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥

4. Slain, thou wilt obtain heaven; victorious, thou wilt enjoy the earth; therefore, stand up, O son of Kunti, resolved to fight. (II. 37)

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

5. Having made pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the same, engage thou in battle for the sake of battle; thus thou shalt not incur sin. (II. 38)

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

6. Thy right is to work only; but never with its fruits; let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction. (II. 47)

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

7. Perform action, O Dhananjaya, being steadfast in Yoga, abandoning attachment and balanced in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called Yoga. (II. 48)

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

8. Endowed with wisdom (evenness of mind), one casts off in this life both good deeds and evil deeds; therefore, devote thyself to Yoga; Yoga is skill in action. (II. 50)

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचार ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥

9. Therefore, do thou always without attachment, perform action which should be done; for, by performing action without attachment, man reaches the Supreme. (III. 19)

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥

10. Renouncing all actions in Me, with the mind centred on the Self, free from hope and egoism, free from (mental) fever, do thou fight. (III. 30)

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥

11. Therefore, O best of the Bharatas, controlling the senses first, do thou kill this sinful (desire), the destroyer of knowledge and realisation. (III. 41)

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥

12. Thus knowing Him Who is superior to intellect and restraining the self by the Self, slay thou O mighty-armed, the enemy in the form of desire, hard to conquer. (III. 43)

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥

13. Therefore, with the sword of knowledge, cut asunder the doubt of the self born of ignorance, residing in thy heart, take refuge in Yoga. Arise, O Bharata! (IV. 42)

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

14. From whatever cause the restless and unsteady mind wanders away, from that (the Object of Meditation), let him restrain it and bring it under the control of the Self alone. (VI. 26)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

15. The Yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics, and even superior to men of knowledge (obtained through the study of Shastras); he is also superior to men of action; therefore, be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna. (VI. 46)

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥

16. Therefore, at all times remember Me only and fight. With mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed) in Me, thou shalt doubtless come to Me alone. (VIII. 7)

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥

17. Knowing these paths, O Partha, no Yogi is deluded; therefore, at all times be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjuna. (VIII. 27)

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥

18. Whoever offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, that I accept offered by the pure-minded, with devotion. (IX. 26)

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥

19. How much more easily then the holy Brahmanas and devoted royal saints (attain the goal)! Having obtained this impermanent and unhappy world, do thou worship Me. (IX. 33)

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥

20. Fix thy mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice to Me; bow down to Me; having thus united thy (whole) self to Me; taking Me as the Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me. (IX. 34)

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥

21. But thou art not able to behold Me with these thine eyes alone; I give thee divine eye: behold My Lordly Yoga. (XI. 8)

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व
जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।

मयैवेते निहताः पुर्वमेव
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥

22. Therefore, stand up! and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. Verily by Myself they have been already slain; be thou a mere instrument, O Arjuna! (XI. 33.)

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च
कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा
युद्ध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥

23. Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors who are already slain by Me do thou kill; be not distressed with sorrow; fight and thou shalt conquer the enemies in battle. (XI. 34)

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥

24. Fix thy mind on Me only; place thy intellect in Me; (then) thou shalt no doubt live in Me alone hereafter. (XII. 8)

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

25. Therefore, let the scriptures be thy authority, in determining what ought to be done, or what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinance of the scriptures, thou shouldst act here (in this world). (XVI. 24)

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥

26. Mentally renouncing all actions in Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to the Yoga of Discrimination, do thou ever fix thy mind in Me. (XVIII. 57)

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥

27. Fly unto Him for refuge with all thy being, O Bharata: by His Grace thou shalt obtain supreme peace and the eternal abode. (XVIII. 62)

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

28. Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt come even to Me; truly do I promise unto thee, for thou art dear to Me. (XVIII. 65)

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

29. Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not. (XVIII. 66)

II

TO AID REMEMBRANCE

Lord Krishna has introduced the following similes in His Discourse:

1. Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied Self casts off worn-out bodies and enters others which are new. (II. 22)

2. To the Brahmana who has known the Self, all the Vedas are of so much use as is a reservoir of water in a place where there is flood everywhere. (II. 46)

3. When like the tortoise which withdraws on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects; then his wisdom becomes steady. (II. 58)

4. He attains Peace into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean which, filled from all sides, remains unmoved; but not the desirer of desires. (II. 70)

5. As the ignorant men act from attachment to action, O Bharata, so should the wise act without attachment, wishing the welfare of the world. (III. 25)

6. As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as embryo by an amnion, so this (knowledge) is enveloped by that (desire). (III. 38)

7. Having known this, the ancient seekers after freedom also performed action; therefore do thou also perform action as did the ancients in the olden time. (IV. 15)

8. As the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. (IV. 37)

9. He who does actions, offering them to Brahman, and abandoning attachment, is not tainted by sin as a lotus-leaf by water. (V. 10)

10. As a lamp placed in a windless place does not flicker—to such is compared the Yogi of controlled mind, practising Yoga in the Self (absorbed in the Yoga of the Self). (VI. 19)

11. The mind verily is, O Krishna, restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding: I deem it quite as difficult to control it as it is to control the wind. (VI. 34)

12. Fallen from both, does he not perish like a rent cloud, supportless, O Mighty-Armed (Krishna), deluded in the Path of Brahman? (VI. 38)

13. There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Dhananjaya. All this is strung on Me, as clusters of gems on a string. (VII. 7)

14. As the mighty wind, moving everywhere, rests always in the Akasa, even so, know thou, do all beings rest in Me. (IX. 6)

15. If the splendour of a thousand suns were to blaze out at once (simultaneously) in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that Mighty Being. (XI. 12)

16. Verily as many torrents of rivers flow towards the ocean, so these heroes in the world of men enter Thy flaming mouths. (XI. 28)

17. As moths hurriedly rush into a blazing fire for destruction, so also these creatures hurriedly rush into Thy mouths for destruction. (XI. 29)

18. This body, O Kaunteya, is called the Field: he who knows it is called Kshetrajna by those who know of them (Kshetra and Kshetrajna), i.e., by the Sages. (XIII. 1)

19. As the all-pervading ether is not tainted because of its subtlety, so the Self seated everywhere in the body is not tainted. (XIII. 32)

20. Just as the one sun illumines the whole world, so also the Lord of the Field illumines the whole Field, O Bharata. (XIII. 33)

21. They speak of the indestructible Asvattha having its root above and branches below, whose leaves are the metres or hymns; he who knows it is a Veda-knower. (XV. 1)

22. Below and above spread its branches nourished by the Gunas; sense-objects are its buds; and below in the world of men stretch forth the roots, originating in action. (XV. 2)

23. When the Lord obtains a body and when He leaves it, He takes these and goes with them as the wind takes the scents from their seats, the flowers. (XV. 8)

24. One should not abandon, O Kaunteya, the duty to which one is born, though faulty; for, all undertakings are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke. (XVIII. 48)

25. The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, causing all beings, by His illusive power, to revolve as if mounted on a machine. (XVIII. 61)

NOTE: Items 11, 12, 16 and 17 are the words of Arjuna to Lord Krishna.

III

॥ सप्तश्लोकी गीता ॥

१. ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥८—१३॥

२. स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ॥११—३६॥

३. सर्वतःपाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वतःश्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥१३—१३॥

४. कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥८—९॥

५. ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥१५—१॥

६. सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥१५—१५॥

७. मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥९—३४॥

IV

॥ एकश्लोकी गीता ॥

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥

V

PRATIJNA GITA

(THE LORD'S ASSURANCES)

The Bhagavad Gita brings to humanity the message of happiness, peace, freedom, fullness and prosperity. The Gita is the only book which gives help to the Sadhaka at every stage

and offers protection from all fears. In the Gita the Lord gives the following assurances:

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥

In this there is no loss of effort, nor is there any harm (production of contrary results or transgression). Even a little of this knowledge (even a little practice of this Yoga) protects one from great fear. (II. 40)

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥

O Partha! Neither in this world, nor in the next world, is there destruction for him; none, verily, who does good, O my son, ever comes to grief. (VI. 40)

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥

Soon he becomes righteous and attains eternal peace; O Kaunteya, know thou for certain that My devotee never perishes. (IX. 31)

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever-united, I secure that which is not already possessed (Yoga) and preserve what they already possess (Kshema). (IX. 22)

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥

Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet thou shalt verily cross all sins by the raft of knowledge. (IV. 36)

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thou shalt come even to Me; truly do I promise unto thee, (for) thou art dear to Me. (XVIII. 65)

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥

For them whose minds are set on Me, verily I become ere long, O Partha, the saviour out of the ocean of the mortal Samsara. (XII. 7)

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not. (XVIII. 66)

VI

GITA-ANUSHTHANA

Those who do Gita Anushthana should, during that period, observe the following discipline.

1. Getting up daily at Brahmamuhurta, 4 a.m.

2. Taking pure and light Sattvic diet once only at noon.

3. Abstaining from coition.

4. Mauna or at least observing Mitabhashana and speaking Truth.

5. Constant mental Japa of the Mantra "Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya."

After daily Saucha, take bath, wear pure cloth, sit on a Kushasana in a clean and pure place, facing the East or the North. Finish the daily (Nitya-Karma) Sandhyavandana, Japa, Dhyana, etc. first. Repeat the 108 or 12 Names of Sri Krishna. Then meditate on Sri Krishna. Then do Sankalpa (the purpose for which the Anushthana is done). Then do Karanyasa and Anganyasa* with the same Mantra the Japa of which you wish to do. Or the Nyasas may be done with the Mantra "Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya."

After this, worship Bhagavan Sri Krishna, Vyasa, and the Gita with 16 Upacharas. The Japa must be done with unruffled and concentrated mind and with full faith and devotion. No speaking or making sounds or signs is allowed in the middle of the Japa. Without shaking the body, and sitting in one Asana, the Japa must be done without turning the head or body and without looking here and there. Only the thought of the Lord should be in the mind. If the desired effect is not seen after the performance of the Anushthana, faith should not be lost, but the Anushthana should be continued thrice or seven times for the sake of getting the Grace of the Lord.

At the end of the Japa, Homa should be performed with oblations equal to one-tenth of the Japa. And after this, Tarpana should be given with libations equal to one-tenth of the Ahutis. Brahmanas or saints equal to one-tenth of the number of the Tarpana, or at least as many as can be possible, should be fed in the end. The Ahutis in the Homa should be offered with ghee and with a mixture of seasamum, flour, Jav, sugar and ghee. Sweet gruel of wheat should be offered to the Lord in worship with the Mantra, "*Esha balih Srikrishnaya namah*" with great humility and faith. That gruel should be offered to the cow the next morning.

After finishing the daily Japa and worship, forgiveness should be asked from the Lord for any commission of mistake in the process of the Anushthana with these Mantras:

आवाहनं न जानामि नैव जानामि पूजनम् ।
विसर्जनं न जानामि क्षमस्व परमेश्वर ॥

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*The method of performing these Nyasas will be found in the Introductory pages.

अन्यथा शरणं नास्ति त्वमेव शरणं मम ।
तस्मात्कारुण्यभावेन रक्ष रक्ष महेश्वर ॥
मन्त्रहीनं क्रियाहीनं भक्तिहीनं जनार्दन ।
यत्पूजितं मया देव परिपूर्णं तदस्तु ते ॥

Then with the Mantra "*Anaya yathopacharapujaya bhagavan Srikrishnah priyatam*" Sashtanga Pranama should be done to the Lord. After this, uttering the following Mantra the Charanamrita of the Lord should be taken and worn on the head.

अकालमृत्युहरणं सर्वव्याधिविनाशनम् ।
सर्वदुःखोपशमनं विष्णुपादोदकं शुभम् ॥

With this the full benefit of the Anushthana shall be gained. The Anushthana should be continued for at least 41 days repeating the Mantra at least 10x108 times daily.

LIST OF MANTRAS FOR JAPA

Mantra	*Effect of Japa*
कार्पण्यदोषोपहत	Fitness for self-surrender.
एवं बुद्धेः परं	Destruction of enemies like desire, etc.
बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि	Steadfastness in devotion.
भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां	Destruction of obstacles in Sadhana.
शनैः शनैरुपरमेत्	Victory over mind.
यतो यतो निश्चरति	Fitness for meditation.
यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र	Ripening of devotion.
सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां	Ripening of wisdom.
मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्	Fitness for beholding God everywhere.
अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन	Destruction of enemies like desire, etc.
अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां	Attainment of Yoga-Kshema.
पत्रं पुष्पं फलं	Fitness for the vision of God.
यत्करोषि यदश्नासि	Acquirement of Divine Grace.

Mantra	*Effect of Japa*
मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य	Fitness for self-surrender.
मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो	Fitness for self-surrender.
तेषां सततयुक्तानां	Becoming Yoga-Yukta.
अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं	Attainment of Viveka.
त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः	Growth of devotion.
वायुर्यमोऽग्निः	Control of mind.
नमः पुरस्तात्	Destruction of delusion.
पितासि लोकस्य	Ability to please the Lord.
तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता	Fitness for God-realisation.
ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि	Devotion to God.
सर्वतः पाणिपादं	Purification of the Antahkarana.
अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा	Knowledge born of Viveka.
सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि	Cessation of anger.
यो मामेवमसंमूढो	Devotion.
मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि	Destruction of obstacles.
सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य	Fitness for God-realisation.
यत्र योगेश्वरः	The Grace of the Lord.

NOTE: The full Mantras should be seen from the Gita. The above are the words with which each Mantra begins.

During Japa meditation should be done on the Lord Sri Krishna. Just as the different Slokas of the Gita are done Anushthana of, even so the Anushthana of the whole Gita also can be done. For different purposes in view, different Slokas can be used as the Samputa Slokas during the Anushthana of the whole Gita. There are two kinds of Samputas. One is to repeat the Samputa Sloka after repeating every Gita Sloka and then repeat the next Gita Sloka. This is called Samputa Japa or Samputa Patha. The other method is to insert the Samputa Sloka "before" and also "after" every Gita Sloka, so that after repeating one Gita Sloka the Samputa Sloka has to be repeated twice before repeating the next Gita Sloka. This is called "Samputavalli" and is more powerful and effective than mere Samputa.

Practically every Sloka of the Gita is a Mantra, and can be used as a Samputa Sloka. It is heard that one saint used each of the Gita Slokas as a Samputa Sloka and thus completed seven hundred Purascharanas of the Gita Anushthana and got the full Grace of the Lord. Yet, some important Slokas are given here which can be used as Samputa Slokas.

LIST OF SAMPUTA SLOKAS

Sloka	*Effect of using it as Samputa*
कार्पण्यदोषोपहत	Fitness for self-surrender.
मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्	Realisation of God everywhere.
पत्रं पुष्पं फलं	Fitness for the vision of God.
ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि	Devotion to God.
अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा	Knowledge born of Viveka.
सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य	Fitness for self-surrender.
यत्र योगेश्वरः	Attainment of all wishes.

In addition to these, many other Slokas also may be used as Samputa Slokas. Before starting and after finishing each Gita Patha 12 Malas or at least one Mala of Dvadashakshara Mantra Japa should be done with Karanyasa and Anganyasa with the same Mantra. The Dhyana for this Japa is:

विष्णुं शारदचन्द्रकोटिसदृशं शङ्खं रथाङ्गं गदा-
मंभोजं दधतं सिताब्जनिलयं कान्त्या जगन्मोहनम् ।
आबद्धाङ्गदहारकुण्डलमहामौलिं स्फुरत्कङ्कणं
श्रीवत्साङ्कमुदारकौस्तुभधरं वन्दे मुनीन्द्रैः स्तुतम् ॥

After this, the Rishi, Chhandas, Devata, Bija, Sakti, Kilaka, Sankalpa, Viniyoga, Karanyasa, Anganyasa and Dhyana of the Gita should be repeated. It is better if the whole Gita is read daily. Otherwise it can be read in two days, 9 chapters per day.

Or it can be read in three days 6 chapters per day. In seven days also it can be read in the following order: (i) Chs. 1, 2. (ii) Chs. 3-5. (iii). Chs. 6-8. (iv) Chs. 9, 10. (v) Chs. 11-13. (vi) Chs. 14-16. (vii) Chs. 17, 18. Else it can be read in 9 days at the rate of 2 chapters per day. If even this is not possible, it can be read in 18 days at the rate of one chapter per day.

If the whole Gita is read daily and continuously without break for one full year, every blessed thing will accrue to that person. All the readings should be done with Nyasa, etc.

If the Gita-Patha is done for forty days in the Samhara Krama, i.e., starting from the 18th chapter and reversely reading upto the 1st chapter, daily thrice, there will accrue to that person liberation from bondage.

If the Gita is read daily for 40 days in the Sthiti Krama, i.e., reading chapters 6 to 18 and again from 5 to 1 reversely, that person will acquire abundant wealth.

The Samhara Krama is meant for the Sannyasin and the Sthiti Krama for the Grihastha.

Anushthana should be done with faith and sincerity and not for the sake of curiosity, testing, or with a fault-finding attitude. If due to some internal impurity or obstruction brought about by past Karma no effect is seen even after seven Anushthanas, the faith should not be lessened. If the inner obstacles are too many, the effect may not be manifested very soon. Even if the effect is not materially manifested, there is no doubt as to the great purification that is done by the Anushthana. Further, if the Anushthana is done with Nishkama Bhava there is no doubt of self-purification and descent of Divine Grace. There is no action which does not produce an effect. What, then, is to be said about the effect of an action like the Gita Anushthana which is done with faith and concentration of mind? The effect is indubitable. It is advisable, according to the words of the Lord Himself, to abandon all motives, and do the Anushthana for the sake of God-realisation alone and nothing else. Hence, the Adhyayana, Pathana, Japa and Manana of the Gita should always be done with pure Nishkama Bhavana.

In the end of Patha of the Gita, its Mahatmya should be read as given in the Varaha-Purana or at least as given in the Mahabharata immediately after the Gita.

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आरती

जय भगवद्‌गीते, जय भगवद्‌गीते ।
हरि-हिय-कमल-विहारिणि, सुन्दर सुपुनीते ॥
कर्म-सुमर्म-प्रकाशिनि, कामासक्तिहरा ।
तत्त्वज्ञान-विकाशिनि, विद्या ब्रह्म परा ॥ जय०
निश्चल-भक्ति-विधायिनि, निर्मल मलहारी ।
शरण-रहस्य-प्रदायिनि, सब विधि सुखकारी ॥ जय०
राग-द्वेष-विदारिणि, कारिणि मोद सदा ।
भव-भय-हारिणि तारिणि, परमानन्दप्रदा ॥ जय०
आसुरभाव-विनाशिनि, नाशिनि तम रजनी ।
दैवी सद्‌गुणदायिनि, हरि-रसिका सजनी ॥ जय०
समता-त्याग सिखावनि, हरि-मुखकी बानी ।
सकल शास्त्रकी स्वामिनि, शृतियों की रानी ॥ जय०
दया-सुधा बरसावनि, मातु! कृपा कीजै ।
हरि-पद-प्रेम दान कर, अपनो कर लीजै ॥ जय०

THE BHAGAVAD GITA